

December, 1938

The Liguorian



THREE CHRISTMAS STORIES:

•
Inocente
W. T. Cullen

•
Banker's Christmas
E. F. Miller

•
The Queen and The King
D. F. Miller

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AMONGST OURSELVES

Comes another Christmas! Seldom during the year do our human moods and emotions rise so easily toward an appreciation of the divine mysteries of faith as at the season of Christmas. Often we have express faith and loyalty and love towards God despite the sluggishness of our emotions if not despite their downright opposition to what reason and faith command. But at Christmas, somehow or other, we not only *believe*, which is the essential thing, but we seem to *feel* the approach of God to us; and when belief and feeling unite, the result is unusual joy. This issue of THE LIGUORIAN, with its many Christmas features, springs from our own mood of joy over the anniversary of Christ's coming; and is sent forth with the hope that it will add immeasurably to the joy of all its readers. The whole LIGUORIAN bespeaks our wish:

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The Liguorian

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"LIGHT THAT ENLIGHTENETH"

I do not know the number of the stars
Nor every planet's orbit through the skies;
I do not know the secret force that bars
The land from sea and sea from land's emprise.

I do not know how white clouds come and go
Nor whence the wind that roars or whispers soft;
How buds burst forth in spring I do not know,
Nor what makes trees lift plumy arms aloft.

I do not know—so many things I do
Not know—of sun and moon and land and sea;
I grope and strain, and find some secret new
In old truths learned; in new, new mystery. . . .

But this I know, and knowing ask no more:
That He Who made the heavens and the earth,
Who sends the winds and rules the tide-washed shore
Came unto me through gate of human birth.

He came, I know, to solve not planet's course
Nor mysteries that hills and seas confine,
Nor fruitlessly to tell the winds' far source—
But to unfold to me my life's design.

Yes, this I know: whence came I, whither bent,
And how the road runs, how to walk and climb;
I know since Christ the God-Man came and went
My stature in eternity and time!

—D. F. Miller.

FATHER TIM CASEY

CHRISTMAS IN IRELAND

C. D. McENNERY

"**T**HANKS be to God, we'll be having a bright dry Christmas Day the morrow," exclaimed Shaun O'Boyle, and he whistled to the sturdy little horse that bore them so bravely along.

"Here's hoping you are the son of a prophet, Shaun," the priest replied from the opposite side of the jaunting car. He was none too sanguine, however, and he drew up the blanket to ward off the cold wind and the brief, pelting showers that drove in from the Atlantic. His spirits rose a few minutes later when the grey clouds, that had hung low all day long, unexpectedly parted and a glorious sun sank slowly beneath the angry waves.

They turned off the highway and onto a side road that climbed the hills and twisted along the ravines between low stone walls or hedges of blackthorn and holly, past many a cosy, white-washed cottage with thatched roof and turf smoke curling from its broad, low chimney.

It was a silent, peaceful region, far removed from the hectic activity of the modern world, a region where even the pulse-beat of the Lordly Shannon, sending electric power and light to all Ireland, had not yet been felt. Hence Father Casey was all the more surprised at what happened a few minutes later.

Suddenly, when darkness fell, hundreds of twinkling lights appeared — above, below, to the right, to the left, some near, some far. There was something other-worldly about it all: the dark road, the sheer cliffs, the lights, the silence, accentuated, rather than broken by the distant murmur of the breakers on the rocks.

"'Tis a custom we have, leastways here in the West," Shaun explained, "to keep a candle in the window to guide St. Joseph and Holy Mary on their weary wandering this night. Those same lights were left burning in every window to deceive the soldiers, though all the houses were empty, the night of the Christmas massacre."

"The Christmas massacre? Tell me about it, Shaun."

"'Twas in the penal times," he began, "every man, woman, and child of the whole countryside had foregathered for midnight Mass in the wild glen behind Hidhlack Cliff — that cliff over to our right. You can see the Mass rock there to this day."

“WHAT is a Mass rock, Shaun?”

“It is a rock with a bit of a shoulder or shelf which the priest could use as an altar. Sure, they're found all over Ireland. They are held in veneration, for they are the only remembrances we have of how our forefathers loved that Mass that kept alive the faith through the trying times. The arks and the Mass houses, that came later, have practically all disappeared.”

“Shaun, you must be patient with an ignorant foreigner and tell me what arks and Mass houses are too.”

“Well, 'twas like this, Your Reverence. After the worst of the penal laws had been repealed, they could no longer hang a priest for saying Mass nor jail a Catholic for hearing it. But they were set to root it out of the land, none the less. Just to give you an example: the place where I met you at the train was built in the time of King Charley, and on the gate in the walls was the edict: No Papist can enter here. Their hankering after ease and comfort got the better of their bigotry, however, to the extent that they let the Catholics in to do their dirty work. But little religious liberty they gave them. Even within the memory of my own father the police were drawn up along the principal street of a Sunday morning while the Protestants rolled by in their fine carriages going to church, and the Catholics were constrained to walk a mile around to get to the other side of the street.”

“It seemed to me, from the salutations I received, there are plenty of Catholics in that town today,” said Father Casey.

“There are indeed, Your Reverence,” replied Shaun.

“Nevertheless,” the priest continued, “they told me the church on the hill, like so many fine old Gothic churches I see in Irish towns, is Protestant.”

“It is, Your Reverence. And why shouldn't those same churches be fine, and why shouldn't they be sitting proudly on the prettiest hills? The invaders used a good part of the stolen wealth to build churches thinking thereby to lure the Irish away from the ancient faith. In the church in that 'model town' a parson still holds services to draw the fat salary attached to the office — but the entire congregation present consists of the parson's wife.”

“Who pays this fat salary?”

“The lands and appurtenances attached to the church. Sure they are part of the booty robbed from the Catholics. So, too, was the money

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for the Soupers — the proselytizers who went about offering soup and bread to starving Irish children to induce them to come to the Protestant church. But the poor people held fast to the Mass and gave generously of their labor and their hard-earned pennies to put up thatched sheds in by-ways and back streets where they could assist at the Holy Sacrifice."

"Were these the Mass houses?" Father Casey inquired.

"They were, Your Reverence. These wretched frail structures have long since disappeared — though we would cherish them as sacred relics if we had them now. And the winding paths that led to them are still a right-of-way and are called Mass paths to this day."

"**A**ND the arks?"

"Well, Your Reverence, they were Mass houses too — of a kind — Mass houses on wheels. The Catholics could no longer be constrained by law from building a chapel on their own land. But they had no land. It had all been taken away from them and given to the Protestants, and what little was left went for fines and punishments. And often the landlords wouldn't so much as let them put up a shed in a corner of a field where they could celebrate the Sacred Mysteries. Then what did they do but build a tiny house on wheels, just big enough for an altar and a roof to cover it, and they drew this down to the wild shore that no landlord owned, and when the tide was out the priest said Mass in the tiny house, and the people knelt on the sand outside in the cold and rain."

"They called these tiny houses arks, did they, Shaun?"

"They did, Your Reverence, because they reminded them of the ark that Moses and — and — Abraham and Isaac and Jacob carried across the sandy bottom of the Red Sea — though it was made of neither gold nor cedar wood, but only of the few poor boards they could pick up, at all."

"You had started to tell me about a massacre when I interrupted you, Shaun."

"'Tis a long, sad story, Your Reverence, and I'll not be burdening you with all the details for we are nearly home. 'Twas a night like this, and, as I was saying, they left a candle burning at every window, as you see them before you, to deceive the soldiers, while every man, woman and child betook themselves to the Mass rock behind yon cliff to assist at Christmas midnight Mass. 'Twas a custom with the soldiers to pass

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that holy night in drinking and carousing, and so the Catholics anticipated little danger, and for that same reason neglected to post guards with the care they were wont to use. Or maybe it was that the guards, thinking all was safe, slipped down from their posts to get a little of the Christmas Mass.

"Now it happened that the judge had been ballyragging the soldiers for that they had brought him nary a priest to hang for months and months. For once the blackguards postponed their revels; they hid about the hills to spy on the Catholics, what way they would be going. They then crawled up along one path where there was no one on guard and swooped down on the group just after the Consecration. Surprised and terror-stricken though they were, not one mother's son of them thought to run for it. Instead they formed about the priest like a solid wall to give him time to take the Body of the Lord and the Precious Blood. The soldiers cut them down like cane stalks, but before they could reach the priest and slay him, he received Communion and saved the Blessed Sacrament. The ditch at the foot of the cliff was full of the blood of Christians who prized the Mass more than life itself. That is why that shelf of limestone has an Irish name which, translated, means the Mass rock of the Christmas night massacre.—But here is my wee cabin, and welcome you are to it. *Cead mile failte, Soggarth aroon.*"

BEING it was a fast night, they supped on bread and tea. They ate their bread sitting before the open grate to take the chill out of their bones, and the teapot was under a "cosey" on the mantle piece beside them.

The tea was hot, the fire was comforting, and Father Casey leaned back in the big armchair and watched the play of the blue flame among the turf sods. The turf sods blazed and glowed and crumbled and took on a dozen fantastic shapes, and the priest kept on watching them with his two hands stretched out luxuriously over the two arms of the big chair—and—gradually—the chair was gone and his two hands were extended and he was chanting *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, and the mantle piece was changed into a shelf of a cliff—a Mass rock, no less—and on it was a chalice and a host, and the clear star-lit sky was above him, and all round about were eager, shining faces—women's faces framed in homespun shawls and the strong, weather-beaten faces of men. The one reminded him of the Jewish Maiden who, on this blessed night,

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brought forth her first-born Son and laid Him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn. The other recalled the rugged mountaineers roused from sleep by angel songs, who said to one another: Let us go down to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass.

"No room for Him." Out of His love for men the great God came down to dwell with men on that first Christmas night and they had no room for Him and He was forced to take refuge in a cave in the side of a cliff. Tonight He was coming again, with that same invincible love which no ingratitude could smother, and still they had no room for Him; He must rest on a rock on the side of a cliff.

And as on that first Christmas the great and the well-to-do were oblivious to the angels' song, which the poor, simple shepherds heard and heeded, so tonight those who lived in ease and comfort were deaf to the call of faith which the poor peasants followed — followed out into the night and the cold and the danger.

Dominus vobiscum. The Lord be with you, hunted and down-trodden children of Erin. And with you He is indeed, for you are a holy race, a chosen people, a royal priesthood. Persecution is powerless to stay you from uniting with the great High Priest to offer to the Eternal Father the Sacrifice of Praise.

Sursum corda. Habemus ad Dominum. Lift up your hearts. We have lifted them up. You have lifted them up above the things of this sordid, fleeting world to the Light Supernal which is this moment reflected in your faces.

Vere dignum et justum est. It is truly meet and just, always and everywhere to offer to the Almighty Eternal God this Sacrifice of Adoration and Thanksgiving and Atonement and Pleading. *Semper et ubique.* Always and everywhere, O sons of Patrick and Bridget and Colum, you have prized this Sacrifice — offered this Sacrifice — in the grand old abbeys, those world-famed sanctuaries of study and prayer, whose ruins dot the green hills of Erin, in the Mass houses and the arks of the days of your oppression, in the hidden chapels of London's and Liverpool's slums, in the glorious cathedrals raised by your hands in all the new lands beyond the sea — always and everywhere, *semper et ubique*, you have loved the Mass, held fast to the Mass.

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Sanctus, sanctus, sanctus. Benedictus qui venit. Holy, holy, holy. Blessed is He that cometh, they repeated in the soft Gaelic tongue. With eager, loving expectation: Blessed is He that cometh.

THEN a confused shouting rent the air. The people closed in, forming a solid wall around him, jostling him, almost suffocating him. He tried to move but could not. The shouting came nearer, grew more defined. He recognized a voice; it was the voice of Shaun, who was shaking him vigorously and calling: "Father Tim, Father Tim, you'll be stiff and sore from sleeping so long in that old chair. I have the pony harnessed to the jaunting car, and we must be on our way if you are to say the midnight Mass."

Examples for Ministers

Miss Rachel K. McDowell, the religious news editor of the *New York Times*, gave a talk some time ago to a select group of Protestant clergymen and lay leaders, in Stanton, New Jersey. Miss McDowell is not a Catholic, but gave this advice to the preachers, as quoted in the *Catholic News*:

"I get myself taken to task sometimes by my Protestant friends for holding up my Catholic priest friends so often for emulation. But nevertheless I am going to do so now.

"It is a very edifying thing, in my judgment, to see a priest reading his 'Office' in the subway or in a train, a bus or other public conveyance. A few days ago a Lutheran minister in New York declared in a sermon that the time in the subway should be used for prayer. This received big newspaper headlines. One of the *New York Times'* editors when he saw that remarked, 'Well, after all, only God can hear you in the subway.'

"Fathers and brethren, I have never been able to get away from that advice. So ever since I have prayed in the subway. As you may know, a Catholic priest must say his 'Office' in Latin every day of his life unless for illness or some other uncontrollable reason. It takes about an hour, I understand, with the prayers and Bible lessons. He must have completed his 'Office' by midnight or make it a matter of confession.

"It would be equally edifying to see our Protestant ministers while riding in public conveyances 'redeeming the time' by reading their devotions. I hope you won't mind my making this suggestion to you. It is a matter much on my heart."

THE QUEEN AND THE KING

"It can't happen here" has become an axiom of our language, applicable to many things other than its original author intended. We warn you that you will think of it if you read this story.

D. F. MILLER

JULIE GREENTREE (née Helen Smith) felt a thrill of expectancy as she neared her home town after many years of absence. Not that there was any particular delight in the mere thought of meeting the old townsfolk again. But it was thrilling to think of how they would be flattered to see her, how they would gather around and admire her; how they would worship her as one who had brought fame to their humble village.

For Julie Greentree was called one of the greater actresses of the day. She had climbed to fame out of the ranks of the thousands of extras who swarmed the streets of Hollywood, haunted the Studios, and starved in one-room apartments. She had made "epic" pictures like "Love Is A Flame" and "The Fickle Heart." They were great pictures, all the critics said, even though the box-office returns had not been so enormous. It was said that the rank and file did not appreciate great art; Julie Greentree's sophisticated love-making and presentation of unleashed passion were above the heads of the masses of movie patrons. Morality was not conceded to have anything to do with it.

But everybody knew Julie Greentree. Even those who had not seen her pictures had read on the front pages of the newspapers about her first and second divorces. The first was spectacular in that it had been preceded by a murder; her first husband had shot a man in a Hollywood night club because he had put his arm around Julie. Right after that she made a statement to the press and divorced him. The statement read in part: "There is no longer room in married life for the old-fashioned jealousy that does not permit a wife to have innocent admirers. I think it best for all concerned that Arvin (the first husband) and I go our separate ways."

The second divorce was a more commonplace affair — like any of a dozen Hollywood divorces. It had been preceded, not by a murder

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but by the inevitable statement to the press: "We have both conceded to ourselves that our marriage was a mistake. We feel that our public will understand." Since that time her name had been coupled with any number of stars as prospects for her third alliance.

But all that was far in the background of her thoughts as Julie returned to her native village. She was now 35 (though the movie magazines gave her age as 26, going on 27) and had left Boneville 16 years before. Her parents had been dead; a maiden aunt and an older married sister had accompanied her to the station. In the succeeding years the maiden aunt had died and the older sister had moved away. But there would be plenty of childhood friends and acquaintances to meet and amaze with the story of her success in Hollywood. And behind it all were the unusual publicity possibilities of the visit; she had gotten some neat headlines already: "Julie Greentree, Well-known Cinemactress, Visits Old Home." "Childhood Scenes Draw Julie Greentree Back to Home Town." "Boneville Fetes Its Own Little Girl Who Made Good." It was Christmas Eve, and so one clever headline had announced her visit: "Julie Greentree to Wait for Santa in Boneville."

THE train puffed to a stop alongside the rickety old station. Boneville was no longer a scheduled stop, but railroad officials had not been loth to make a stop there for so prominent a personage as Julie Greentree. She stepped down from the parlor car; the porter deposited her four bags at her feet, signalled to the engineer, and the train slowly pulled away. Julie looked about her. There was not a soul in sight.

There was a mistake somewhere, she thought. Besides the headlines that had announced her coming in the daily papers, she had written to relatives and friends in Boneville telling them the exact hour of her arrival. She had expected the whole town to be out to meet her.

But there was no one. She left her bags and walked around to the front of the stationhouse. The street was empty, but across the way a man sat on a box beside a few bedraggled-looking Christmas trees that were announced "For Sale." He looked up inquiringly as Julie approached.

"How do you do," she said. "I'm Julie Greentree."

"Pleased to meetja," said the man without moving. "I'm Jeff Coates.

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That's the first time I seen that there train stop in Boneville in four months. Want to buy a Christmas tree?"

"No," said Julie. "I'm from Hollywood, and I came to visit some of my old friends here."

"I guess nobody kin stop you from doing that. But everybody's a mite busy right now, it being Christmas Eve and all like that. Anybody know you was coming?"

"Yes, I wrote to the Nortons —"

"They's all dead or moved away."

"And the Fentons —"

"The girls is married and moved to the city. The boys bought a farm about fifteen miles out several years back and don't get down to town much except for Church and such."

"And the Smiths —"

"Oh, they're still here. But you like to find them up to Church right now. The girls is probably practicing in the choir for the Christmas Mass. The boys always builds up the crib on Christmas Eve."

"They are my cousins."

"You don't say. What'd you say your name was?"

"Julie Greentree."

"Don't recollect as I ever in my life heard o' that name around here. Greentree. H'm. Sure would of remembered if I ever knew anybody with a name like that."

"My name used to be Smith."

"Oh, that's different. Seems to me they was a Smith girl left here about fifteen-sixteen years ago. Went in for the movies, they said." The old man reminisced as if Julie was not standing before him. "Heard tell that she got messed up in some of them movin' picture shenanigans. Got herself a couple divorces — . It that you?"

"I guess I'm the one."

The old man turned away in utter disinterestedness.

"You'll find the Smiths up to Church, like I told you."

THE Church was plainly visible a block or two away — the most prominent thing in the town. Julie turned to walk towards it when she remembered her bags. She said to Jeff Coates :

"Is there anybody around here who will carry my luggage for me?"

"Don't see nobody," said Jeff, without looking at her.

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"What shall I do with it?"

"Leave it there 'till you find out where you're going to settle down.
Nobody'll touch it."

She went on up the street toward the Church. A hundred yards away she could hear voices loudly, if not too melodiously, singing Christmas hymns. She had never felt so utterly alone in her life. Disappointment, chagrin, frustrated vanity, helplessness, all crowded in upon her pampered heart. She cursed under her breath—as she was accustomed to curse at directors who wouldn't see things her way. This time she cursed herself for getting the crazy idea of coming back to this "dump"; she cursed the town and all its people. She cursed the publicity agent who had so enthusiastically suggested the "visit back home" as a real scoop for the papers. But the town remained as silent and hushed, except for the singing, as it was before.

She paused a while before the door of the Church. Reminiscence crowded out anger and she saw herself here as a child again. Could it be possible, she thought, that as a child she had seized the knob on this Church door hundreds of times and gone in here as into a home? Yes, she had. How often she had been to confession, to tell of a word whispered in Church, or of an angry reply given to another child, or of a bit of half-conscious jealousy of someone else's good fortune.

"Oh, this is drivel," she said to herself, shaking her head in contempt of her thoughts. But the thoughts kept on—flooding her memory as she looked upon the knob of the door that would open the Church to her.

How often she had entered here for Mass. Little understanding it all as a child—but knowing it was something great and holy and sublime; knowing, after the manner of a child, the essential thing, that it had something to do with Christ's death on the Cross—was, in fact, bringing that death to her, making it her own means of eternal happiness.

"Such rot," she said to herself. "I was a child then. I'm a woman now. I've seen life. I've got money and friends and fame. This is all past—gone forever—forgotten."

Forgotten? No. You don't forget happiness. And those were happy years—when you could skip about without a fear or a worry, except the little worries about whether you were going to get a new hair-ribbon or whether you would be allowed to march in the procession during May

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or sing in the choir at Christmas. Christmas! Who could ever forget that — though all Hollywood had set her on a throne and worshipped her like a god. In all the flattery and adulation of these years there had not been one millionth of the sense of joy that had been hers when she touched this church door-knob as a child and entered to worship another — One Who was a human being, but also a God.

"Superstitious, sentimental, old fool that I am," she said with lip-biting anger. She took hold of the door-knob and entered the Church.

THIS place was noisy with activity. A group of men moved about the sanctuary, carrying statues and stones and pine trees and fixtures. Up in the choir loft the singing had stopped, but the organist was giving instructions about the singing of the next hymn. No one paid the slightest attention to the luxuriously dressed stranger who had entered the Church.

She sat down in a rear seat to get possession of herself. The situation was absolutely unfathomable to her. She had lived so long in the midst of ballyhoo and sycophancy and hero-worship that these people were maddening in their neglect of her. They knew she was coming. They knew who she was. They must have heard at least that she was making 150,000 dollars a year. She was doing them a favor by coming to this dead hole of a town to let them gaze at her. And they had not even sent anyone to meet her. They knew she was due in town about this time. And yet here they were, singing Christmas carols and building a make-believe crib and fussing about with cheap streamers and decorations. It just couldn't be true.

But it was true. And now she began to see a possible reason for it. Perhaps they really believed that someone else was coming to visit them. Not a movie-actress; not a millionaire spendthrift; not a twice divorced plaything of the public newspapers. They really believed that God was coming to them in the form of a Babe. If they believed that, perhaps it was not so strange that no one cared about seeing her. If they believed that, they no doubt believed the things He said — what was it? — something about divorce with remarriage and adultery being one and the same? Yes, she had believed it once, and it had filled her life with beauty and romance — and with fear of those who acted contrary to what He said. Possibly these people were not only indifferent to her — perhaps they looked on her as an outcast — an enemy of all they held most sacred and dear.

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Now terror took possession of her. The terror of being looked down upon and scorned by these, her own people, whom she had left to become the idol of millions who cared not a rap that she was a libertine and a pagan. The hymns being practiced over her head became a chant exalting purity and simplicity and faith in God. The men in the sanctuary became shepherds, kneeling with light-transfigured faces before a stable thronged with angels — and there was one angel standing apart, whose task was to guard her and keep her from approaching the stable. But she did not want to approach the stable. She did not believe in it. She hated it. She hated it — no. She didn't hate it. That's why the angel was there to keep her away. Because she loved it and yet was too much of a coward to throw off the furs she had won at the gambling devices of sin; too much of a coward to crawl on her knees through thorns and briars to a place beside the shepherds.

SHE got up from the pew and left the Church. In the crisp December air the maddening thoughts and fancies left her. Her anger against the people of the village returned. She would leave the place at once.

She walked down to the street on which the station stood. Jeff Coates still sat by his Christmas trees.

"When can I get a train out of here?" she asked him.

"You can't," he said. "Ain't no trains stoppin' here."

She stamped her foot in fury. "Where is the nearest station stop?"

"Forty five miles away — up to Reed City."

"I'll give you a hundred dollars if you'll get a car and drive me there."

"Not me, you won't, lady. Not on Christmas eve."

"Isn't there a taxi in town?"

"Yes'm."

"Who runs it?"

"I do."

There was silence for a moment. Julie was beside herself. All she could do was splutter: "You — you —"

"T'won't help, miss. T'won't help a bit. You'll just have to step across the street and get them bags of yours and carry 'em over to the hotel. It's up above the tavern down the street there a spell. They ain't no running water in your room, and they's a bit of plaster out of the ceiling, and you'll find it a mite cold because we can't afford a stove

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for the room. But they's lots of covers and if you get to bed right quick you'll keep good and warm. And," he added thoughtfully, "it's a lot bettern' a stable."

The old man rose slowly from the box on which he had been sitting. "You see," he said, "we know'd you was coming. The Smiths told me to have the room ready, because I run the hotel. They allowed they'd be too busy getting ready for Him to have time for you." He jerked his thumb toward the Church.

Then he started moving towards the tavern. Over his shoulder he said: "They also hired me to take you to Reed City, first thing in the morning. Paid in advance, too, by gum. Well, be seein' you at the hotel."

Julie stood petrified for a full minute. Then she walked slowly toward the bags. A light wind blew up suddenly, coming from the direction of the church. On it rode a strain of music, the words which leaped into her mind:

"Silent night, Holy night. . . ."

Then she knew she was an outcast from the house of her Father — perhaps forever.

Wise Nonsense

Gracie Allen, champion nonsense dispenser of radio and screen, has entered the field of art. Having seen a few samples of "surrealistic art" (the kind of pictures you can hang upside down without anyone knowing the difference), she decided that she was just the type to produce that sort of thing at its best. So she painted a few pastels, and had them displayed. She refused to explain them, saying that most of her titles were self-explanatory. The title under one of the pictures was:

"Behind the Before Yet Under the Vast Above the World is in Tears and Tomorrow is Tuesday."

Gracie, apparently, has more than nonsense in her head. She knows when art becomes nonsense, and deserves laughter as such. She deserves an art medal.

JOSEPH AND MARY

E. F. Miller

The boy's name was Joe; the girl's, Mary. Joseph and Mary! Just like that other Mary, Mary was very beautiful, beautiful not only in the possession of golden hair and a delicately carved face and a trim and healthy figure, but in the possession of those rarer and more precious qualities of innocence and purity and spiritual power that reside in the soul and are reflected even in the body. And just like that other Joseph, Joe was strong and stalwart and completely masculine, radiating freshness, soundness, reliability.

Joe and Mary were engaged to be married, and as all who saw them said, they made a magnificent couple. Because they were Catholics, and because they were human, they received Holy Communion every morning.

It was Wednesday night. Joe and Mary were returning from a movie. The night shone bright and starry, with a full moon hanging low in the heavens and flooding the earth with a silvery glow. It was just the right kind of a night for lovers.

The problem that dwelt in the minds of Joe and Mary was this. Should they follow the boulevard to their homes, the boulevard that was brightly lighted all the way and crowded with people and other automobiles, or would it be all right to take the dimly lighted and unfrequented side streets where they could enjoy each other's company undistracted by traffic and bothersome crowds? Which way?

Joe looked on Mary as he looked on that other Mary. To him she was a creature dwelling far above the paths of ordinary men, made by angel hands in the place where angels live. And Mary trusted Joe as she might have trusted the foster father of the Infant Jesus. In fact that is why they wanted to be alone, Joe to drink in Mary's beauty and absorb her inspiration; Mary to revel in that sense of security and safety. Did not the first Joseph and Mary take a long trip across the desert to Egypt together and alone? God was with them. Well, God was still with his friends, and, the second Joe and the second Mary felt they were God's friends. But then again, wasn't there something in Catholic doctrine which made necessary things safe, and the same things, if unnecessary, dangerous?

And of a sudden Joe and Mary found themselves following the boulevard that was brightly lighted and crowded with people and other automobiles. The reason? I think the first Joseph and Mary were with the second all the time guiding the steering wheel and pointing out the way. Their Son told them, "This boy and this girl are my friends; in fact I paid them a special visit this morning. Look after them, shadow them, protect them." And they did.

CHRISTMAS BUT NO CHRIST

It is strange how this contrary old world clings to Christmas, and and yet plots and plans to keep Christ out of it by every means in its power. How much of this contrariness affects Catholic lives?

C. DUHART

THREE has been a great deal of nonsense spoken and written about the relative importance of the factors which make up the history of the human race. Among other easily-exploded theories which he advanced, Karl Marx, the great high-priest of Communism, maintained that all history is to be explained on the basis of economics — and to support that contention he held that the struggle for bread and butter accounts for everything — Gothic cathedrals, works of art, democratic constitutions, the rise of Christianity, the sanctity of the saints, the purity of John Smith and the honesty of Henry Jones. On the face of it, the hypothesis is ridiculous, and every sane man, especially a sane Christian, laughs it out of court.

But there is a strange tendency, sometimes even among Catholics who should know better, to minimize and deprecate the part played by spiritual factors in the history of the world. When William Thomas Walsh in his great work, "Philip II," proposed a concept of history which centered in the spiritual struggle of the forces of evil against the forces of good, he was immediately taken to task and accused of being too naive in his judgments.

When a man, be he the deepest scholar in the world, begins to speak of man as man, apart from his being the child of God, he is speaking sheer nonsense. Man as he exists, is essentially the child of God; his fundamental concern is the salvation of his immortal soul; his chief struggle is not for bread and butter, nor after the sublime heights of knowledge for knowledge's sake, but rather an all-important hand-to-hand conflict against spiritual enemies for the goal of eternal happiness.

For the Catholic, there is no doubt as to the relative importance of all the interests which clamor for his attention. The warning of Eternal Truth Himself constantly rings in his ears. "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?" What does it profit if a man become lord of all knowledge, a wizard of

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research, a master of finance or anything else, if he neglects the care due to his immortal soul? "First things first" is a principle which could well stand a great deal of emphasizing in the world today.

Whether mad Hitler swallows up all of southeastern Europe or not, whether President Roosevelt runs for a third term or not, are in themselves relatively unimportant conjectures when compared to the all-important question, the breath-taking issue of whether Johnny and Mary and Pauline and Joe and Mr. Jones and Mrs. Smith will save the immortal souls.

THE fundamental fact of history as we know of it as a struggle for our soul's salvation was the fall of our First Parents. Since that day a most fierce conflict has raged between what may be called the forces of evil, under their leader, Satan, and the forces of good, under their leader, God, and compared to that titanic struggle, the World War and even Mr. H. G. Wells' "War of the Worlds" are issues of negligible interest.

The most active force in the world today, after Jesus Christ and the Blessed Virgin Mary, is a person of whose existence men do not care to think — the devil. Today men scoff at the notion of a real, actual, living personality, which is pure spirit and all evil, vitally concerning itself in the affairs of men. And it is just because men deny his existence, or do not permit themselves to consider the matter at all, that the influence of the devil is so potent. He has always done his most insidious work in darkness. He has always thrived when men least suspected his presence.

Though the devil is surely the center and guiding genius of what are often termed the forces of evil, he is not the entire organization. He has managed to win to his side in every age, allies from the human race who were only too eager to do his bidding. Often they may not have even dreamt for whom they were slaving, yet they did the devil's work. At times, whole organizations have placed themselves at the disposal of their master in the attempt to wash the world clean of Christianity and all for which Christianity stands.

Whatever the learned may think of such a concept of history as it has worked out in its fundamental conflict, the fact stands on its own merits. What is St. Peter talking about when he speaks of the devil going about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, if there

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is no struggle between the forces of evil and the forces of good? What can have possessed the Apostle of the Gentiles to warn the early Christians that their struggle was not against flesh and blood, but against powers and principalities, if the devil and his allies are not real enemies to be feared? What can Christ have meant by his references to the Prince of Darkness, to the world as opposed to Him and His Church, if there is no such thing as an organized warfare being waged against Christianity?

All of which finds its application in a fact which is pertinent to the season of Christmas. This concentrated, organized, well-planned, cleverly conducted attack against the Catholic Church and the spirit of Christ, has been carried on across many battle fronts, and it is only with regard to what may be called a slight skirmish on one of the flanks, that the following application is made.

QUITE clearly, Christianity without Christ, and the Catholic Church without its Founder and Preserver would be reduced to impotent forces. What better than to oust Christ from the dealings of men upon earth? He has been a constant thorn in the side of those who would have a Christless world, and to get rid of Him has become the battle-cry of the forces of evil.

Supposing by way of example, that I had taken a deep antipathy to the combination of spinach and pigs' feet. This deadly diet had wrecked great ravages upon my constitution. I have worked myself up into such a blind rage on the subject, that I would have these articles of fare banished from every dining board, and the very names cut out of the dictionary. Johnny or Mary tells me in childish faith that spinach will build "Pop Eye" muscles. I whisper very solemnly into their ears, "Mustn't say that word which begins with s— that's a naughty word." And so with my acquaintances. They soon learn that at the mere mention of spinach, my powers of affable comaraderie vanish and I become a raving maniac.

Something of this feeling possesses those who cannot abide the name of Christ. It has become a matter of bad taste to speak of Christ in ordinary conversation. The contributions of Julius Caesar, and Alexander, and Pericles and of all the rest, to the human race can be made the subject of interesting and animated discussions when men

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meet, but Christ's great accomplishment of the salvation of the human race is a matter which must be reserved for the pulpit.

We excuse ourselves by saying that religion and Christianity and the love of Christ are topics too sacred to be bandied about in ordinary conversation. But is that a worthy alibi? If we were truthful with ourselves would we not be forced to admit that what dissuades us from such discussions is a weak-kneed shame of seeming to be too religious? And is not such a shame a rather degrading form of cowardice?

Such an attitude did not grow up over night. It was the object of a well-planned campaign to oust Christ from human affairs. In the ages of Faith, people did not shrink from speaking of the things which lay closest to their hearts. They found their pleasure and their happiness in making Christ the focal point of all their life's interests.

THE Christmas season is close at hand once again, and those who like to think of Christmas for what it really means, are in for more heart-aches in witnessing the lessening influence of the real spirit of Christmas, and the heightening forgetfulness of what Christmas really means. The attitude is manifested very clearly in a great number of the post cards which clutter the counters of our notion stores. People who have no more business to design Christmas cards than Marshall Goldberg or Jack Dempsey have to conduct the ceremonial functions of Buckingham Palace, offer as specimens of the Christmas spirit, drawings of bleak wintry scenes, accompanied by meaningless doggerel which carries absolutely no significance.

One would suppose that Christian art has produced nothing which might be made the worthy subject of a Christmas card. The truth is that perhaps no theme has been worked more extensively by the great artists of history, and has produced more masterpieces than the theme of the birth of Jesus Christ in the stable of Bethlehem. How much more closely, how much more tenderly do such drawings fit in with the real spirit of Christmas than inane etching of dreary landscapes amidst stretches of snow?

The forced divorce of Christ from the feast of Christmas has been a gradual process. One can hardly fail to see in it the result of a well-planned course of action, the goal of a definite plot — something like that most insane period of the French Revolution when the names of

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the days of the week and the months were changed in an attempt to blot out entirely the Christian scheme of things.

Is there anything that ordinary Christians can do to restore the real Christmas atmosphere into the greetings which are exchanged at this season of the year? There is a great deal they can do. They can refuse to send any cards except those which carry some Christian significance, and some earnest hope of a blessing from the new-born Savior. They can overcome a certain timidity, or shall we say, cowardice, about appearing to be too religious.

But so many notion stores do not carry such cards. That is no excuse. Recourse can be had to other stores or to certain Catholic organizations, which will be only too happy to supply the man who wishes to put real meaning into his Christmas greetings. The ordinary Christian can ask for cards which do carry some timely significance. He can refuse any substitute, and he will find that his dealer will be only too eager to stock himself with what his customers desire. He is human after all. He supplies himself with what is in demand. If weak-kneed Catholics have always asked for dull, meaningless Christmas cards, he sees to it that they obtain them. But if Catholics become Christian minded, and Christmas-minded, the dealers' stock in trade will mark the difference.

Why not make Christmas cards a real expression of what Christmas means? Why not do our part to restore Christ to His deserved position as King and Center of the Christmas feast? Take Christ out of Christmas and there remains a feast no more noble than the pagan festivals. Take Christ out of Christmas, and the very word itself vanishes. Take Christ out of Christmas, and one of the few warm, bright lights which keeps a spark of hope and happiness glowing in the chillness and hardness of a business-minded world, will be extinguished.

THE Catholic who wishes Christmas to become Christmas in fact and not only in word, will do his best to restore to Christmas, its vitalizing element, the presence of Christ. One of the ways he will do that will be by making his Christmas mail Christian rather than pagan. And if enough Catholics and other Christians co-operate in such a plan of action, that plot of the forces of evil to oust Christ from the world and all its interests, will have come to naught at least in one important engagement.

Three Minute Instruction

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

To Catholic thought and sensibility, there is apt to be something revolting in the mere raising of the question as to whether Mary the Mother of Jesus was always a virgin. Nevertheless, in this age of paganism and untutored sophistication, the question is raised; and doubts are cast upon the Virgin Birth of Jesus that are as old as Christianity, and have been answered dozens of times in every century. It is well to know these answers, because, of course, those who raise the question have never heard them.

1. The fact that Mary was a Virgin in and through the birth of Jesus is stated simply by Holy Scripture. Isaías prophesies that the Saviour will be born of a virgin. Almost every time Mary is mentioned in the New Testament in connection with the birth of Jesus she is called a virgin. She herself raised the question of her virginity to the angel who tells her she is to become the mother of the Redeemer, and he answers that it will be accomplished miraculously through the power of the Most High.

2. The objection is raised that the New Testament speaks of the "brothers of Jesus," as if to indicate that Mary was not a virgin and had more than one child. Those who raise the objection do not know two things: *a)* the Aramaic language had no word for "cousin," and used the word "brother" for almost any kind of relative. Innumerable instances in the Old Testament prove this; e.g. the word is used in Genesis for nephews, in Leviticus for distant cousins, in I Paralipomenon for first cousins and in Job for relatives in general, etc. *b)* Since these are all possible meanings for the Aramaic word "brothers," absolutely nothing can be proved from its use in connection with the Saviour. Moreover, what evidence we have of the families of the men of whom it was used in the Gospels indicate that they were actually cousins of Jesus.

3. It is objected that Jesus is called Mary's "first-born son," and that this implies that she had other sons. Those who object thus do not know that "first-born son" was a technical phrase used of a mother's first child whether there were any other children or not. It was technical because many prescriptions of the Mosaic Law pertained to first-born sons. That it never meant necessarily that there were other children is clear from the fact that the Jews often spoke of a mother dying while bringing forth her first-born son.

These answers are so simple that it would seem everybody should know them. Yet books by professedly learned people raise the old objections anew. Catholics need not fear such scholarship.

BANKER'S CHRISTMAS

When Christmas comes, some of the maxims and accepted practices of daily life do not seem quite so acceptable. Now take this banker, for instance —

E. F. MILLER

IT WAS a bitter, nasty night on the downtown streets — that Christmas eve, a night such as gets into the bone and blood of a man and even into his soul, and makes him conscious in a sharp and vivid way of his aloneness in the world and his loneliness, of the exile which is the earth. There was little of that soft and shimmering snow which is generally associated with Christmas carols and Midnight Mass; but rather a fine silt of broken clouds that the winds had gathered up and edged and sharpened, and hurled with shrieks now of poignant sadness, now of high pitched laughter, against the bodies of all who would dare to face their onslaught. Even the street lights and the poles on which they hung gave forth the impression of stiff and eerie immobility, like little giants that had frozen in their tracks, their eyes remaining open in ghastly and unseeing stare.

It was such a night as made by way of contrast a comfortable living room a veritable paradise. And from my cheerless newsstand where I was keeping vigil I began to visualize the scenes of joy and happiness that I knew held sway in a thousand, ten thousands homes in the mighty city which surrounded me and of which I was a forgotten part. There would be warmth, soft warmth, like the warmth of a summer day; there would be music, sweet music, like the music of the angels; there would be mistletoe and laughter and good wishes expressive of the spirit of Christmas.

The spirit of Christmas! There was little room for it in my heart. I was a newsboy. Or better, I was a man twenty-four years old converted by circumstance and greed and injustice into a newsboy, forced to take up the menial and humiliating task of hawking papers and magazines from a battered stand deep in Chicago's Loop in order to stay off starvation. The spirit of Christmas! What did it mean to me? What had it done for me? The man who at this very moment was kneeling beside the family Christmas tree, and with a great display of good will

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and kindness, was dispensing to his children and his friends the gifts that lay about in great profusion, was the one who had broken my courage and destroyed my dreams. The spirit of Christmas! This same man would have his picture in the next edition of the papers for his "Yuletide benefactions to the city's poor," as he had his name on the portals and the cornerstones of the hospitals and orphanages that he had built with the money that was not his own. Well could he afford to have the spirit of Christmas on Christmas eve to cover over with a meagre salve the deeds of the months before — deeds that like a whip lashed and scourged the hopes of a man who meant nothing to him and yet who had dreams as he had, who possessed a heart to love and be loved as he did. Oh, why couldn't I forget! Why must the scene of my misfortune keep recurring to my mind even at a time like this! There it was again at the very moment I was trying to forget it, re-enacted in my newsstand as though happening for the first time. The president of the bank, seated at his desk; the high ceiling; the polished floor; myself. . . .

"Would it be possible to give me a raise," I heard myself saying, "just a few dollars more than I'm making now to tide me over certain expenses that are coming up?"

"A raise?" was the response, with lifted eyebrows and tapping fingers.

"Yes, that's it," I went on eagerly. "You see fifteen dollars a week is hardly enough to get me by. I assure you I don't waste any of it."

"Why, my boy, many a man is living on fifteen dollars a week, and saving money besides. We couldn't think of raising salaries right now what with the depression and so forth in full blast. You must be content with what you are getting and strive to work your way to better things. When that day comes you can be sure we will recognize your talents in appropriate fashion."

"But, listen," I pleaded, "I'm getting married. And it's impossible for two to live in decency in a city this size on a salary like the one I've been getting, or to try and raise a family. Please! My girl and I have waited long enough, and we don't want to wait any longer."

"Oh, so that's it." A look of regret appeared on his face. "Well, I'm sorry to hear that, very sorry. As you know, we could hardly carry married men on our pay roll in this bank if they found it impossible to get along on the salary they received before they got married. I'm sure you see the point. Perhaps you had better see the cashier and

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settle up. It may be that you can find a better situation elsewhere." The interview was over; my job gone; my girl lost. A kind of numb despair took hold of me, and turning to go I found the palatial office of the president of the bank disappearing, the shining walls becoming once more the dusty, unvarnished walls of a newsstand. The winds moaned mercilessly and mournfully outside, tiny flakes of snow began finding entry at the windows, and the smirking, smiling faces of movie stars and bathing beauties looked down on me from a dozen magazines and scoffed at my loneliness and sorrow. I crowded close to the fire, found a comfortable position, and in a few minutes was fast asleep.

A BLOCK away a boy about twelve years of age, not more, was fighting his way down the street against the wind. He was poorly dressed, without overcoat or gloves, his only weapon against the weather being a dirty old stocking cap that he had pulled far down over his ears. His face was pinched and thin, his body undernourished, and each blast of wind that rushed to meet him cut and hurt him like a whip. When he would espied a man approaching him, he would run up and say, "Please, sir, could you give me something for the sake of Christ?" There were not many people on the streets at that late hour and in such weather, but those who were, were engrossed in their own affairs, and did not hear the plaintive cry, or if they did, did not heed it.

From time to time he stumbled as he hurried along and fell flat on his face. Each time he fell, he arose with greater difficulty. Oh, so comfortable did it feel to lie there in the gutter, to doze off while the winds whistled overhead, to forget his home, his mother, the reason of his walking through the streets on a night like this. He did not feel much pain anymore. An hour ago it was almost too much to bear; his hands and feet seemed to be gripped as in a mighty vise that was crushing out of them any life that might have been there. He could not keep the tears from his eyes, nor the sobs from his throat. "Dear Jesus, help."

That was an hour ago. The pain was all gone now, and he felt nothing any more but the longing desire to lie down and go to sleep. But he could not! He could not! It was Christmas eve and he had work to do, hard bitter work that could not be avoided. He must go on. "Please, sir, can you give me something for the love of Christ?"

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Yes, he had to go on, even though the buildings and the street about him were growing hazy, and even though the wind was turning into song. Was that a light ahead? He would go inside for a while, if they would let him, and rest a bit; then he could be on his way once more. He stumbled to the door, raised his hand to knock. It fell to his side. No longer could his eyes remain open. No longer could he remember where he was or what he was doing. With a crash he toppled against the door, slid to the sidewalk, then lay quite still.

NOT more than two blocks away, a middle-aged man was also struggling against the rigors of the night. He was not cold, for his body was swathed in the best and warmest clothes that money could buy. He was a rich man, a very rich man, a man who could afford to buy anything his heart desired. Strange that he should be walking the streets on Christmas eve, but then again perhaps the streets afforded the best place and Christmas eve the best time for the accomplishing of the task that he had set himself to do. He had a problem to solve and a job to do, and both the problem and the job had turned his mind into such turmoil that he did not know for the moment what way to turn. It had all come about by accident. On going home to celebrate Christmas eve with his family in the way that he had learned in his youth before money took charge of him, he found the house full of young people whom he did not know, all more or less under the influence of too many cocktails, and all jiggling and jumping to the latest "swing" tunes that came blaring over the radio. In disgust he left the house, and hardly knowing where he was going, found himself in church, in the confessional telling his sins to the priest and listening to the advice that followed. It may have been that the priest was tired, that the long hours in the confessional that day had frayed his nerves till they were taut and tender. At any rate, this is part of what he said.

" . . . it makes me tired to see so many Catholics doing absolutely nothing that means something to God, acting as though they did not know what it was all about. Christ was God and yet He became a man, born in a stable amongst a lot of cattle, and all for you and the rest who are like you. There's the example. And what are you doing about it? You say you don't do anything very bad; I say neither do you do anything very good. And if you examined your conscience a little better, perhaps you'd find more there than appears on a cursory glance.

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But the point is, if a real idea, a Christ-like idea ever came to you, and it meant sacrifice to carry it out, you'd faint. You're too well satisfied with yourself, all of you, to come even close to the Christ of the stable after whom you are called Christian. Well, if you can't think of anything to do, all I could say to you, wouldn't help any." With that he gave absolution, and closed the slide.

That is why the middle-aged man was walking the streets. "The Christ of the stable. What are you doing about it?" Funny that words like that should suddenly have an impression on him when they never made an impression before! Like a bomb shell his smugness and self-satisfaction exploded and left his peace of mind in fragments. What could he do to redeem himself? For half an hour he walked aimlessly through this street and that, not worrying much which one he took or where it led. He had to find a solution, an answer. But how? Where? In the distance, a light suddenly appeared. Perhaps it was an eating place. He would go in and have a cup of coffee. He approached closer, opened the door, and then discovered that it was not an eating place, but a newsstand. He paused for a moment, then entered and softly closed the door behind him. Neither the man in the center of the room nor the boy crouching near the stove heard him or saw him take a chair in the corner. They were deep in conversation.

I WAS rudely awakened from my sleep by a crash outside the door. Arising quickly to investigate, I discovered lying on the sidewalk the inert body of a boy. I took him in my arms, and carried him inside. Stripping off his stiff and tattered clothes, and wrapping him in a blanket, I rubbed his body for fifteen minutes till the blood once more began to flow and the color to come back into his cheeks. At last his eyes flickered, and faintly I heard the words, "Please, sir, give me something for the sake of Christ." Then he sat up and looked around in great surprise.

"Gee, I must have fainted," he said. "I'm sorry. I have to be going now." He tried to rise.

"Oh, no, my little friend," I said, "you just wait a minute. You can't go out in that cold again, at least for a time. Listen to the wind, and look at the frost on the windows. It must be 'way below zero. Why, it would make a snowflake of you before you knew it. You have to stay right here till your father comes to get you."

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"I can't, I can't. I haven't any father," he cried, tears coming to his eyes. "I have to go and get some money for my mother. She's sick, and there's nobody to take care of her. We haven't even any fire in the house. Please let me go. She'll die if I don't get some money right away for a fire and a doctor. Please let me go. I don't mind, really. You see the little Christ Child was cold too when he was born tonight, and I'm trying to be a second little Christ Child. Please let me go."

"Do you mean to say you have no fire in the house on a night like this, and that your mother is sick? And you are not afraid to go on the streets alone to beg for money?" I whistled softly to myself. This was like something you read about in books. And Christmas eve too, when there should be only happiness and warmth and peace! It was certainly like that other Christmas eve when another little boy appeared in a cold and unhearing world begging only for a bit of shelter and friendship, and receiving only a stable. At least that's all He got from me — a stable. My calamity didn't seem half so bad in comparison to this boy's and that other Boy's. Certainly their courage made me feel like a coward and a fool. Drivelling around the way I was — I should be lined up against a wall and shot.

"No, kid, you stay here for the moment," I went on, "I have some money around some place — it's only about five dollars, I think, but it's all I have and it will help." I arose to get the money from my register, when there appeared before me a man — a man I knew — *THE* man who had deprived me of my job and destroyed my marriage. A great anger came over me, and forgetting again the meaning of the feast of Christmas, I cried out.

"You — you, here? Get out, get out, I say, before I throw you out." I pushed him towards the door.

There was no look of anger on his face. Slowly he approached me, and in his hand were two pieces of paper.

"I deserve your scorn," he said, "but I need your charity. It wasn't until tonight that I realized what a fool I've been. I heard everything that went on in this room, and that with something else that happened to me — maybe it was the Christ Child or this child here — has brought me to my senses. You come back to the bank this week sometime, and we'll see what we can do. Meanwhile," he paused, cleared his throat, then went on, "meanwhile, take these — I wrote them while I was sitting there in the corner — and don't tell a soul that I had a single thing to

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do with it. One is for the boy and his mother — see what you can do for them — and the other is for you and your sweetheart. Congratulations and a Merry Christmas." He pushed the slips into my hand, and before I could say a word, the door had closed upon him.

I looked down, first at one, then at the other. They were checks.

On each was written in large bold letters: ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS.

What We All Need

- More thinking and less drinking.
- More work and less talk.
- More self-forgetfulness and less self-glorification.
- More constructiveness and less criticism.
- More simplicity and fewer airs.
- More copying of kindly and worthy deeds and less imitations of fads and follies and foibles.
- More real recreation and less dissipation.
- More reality and less sham.
- More study clubs and fewer social clubs.
- More helpful, hopeful conversation and less gossip.
- More emphasis on manners and morals and less on money.
- More sincerity and less smartness.
- A greater desire for social usefulness than for social prestige.

Maxims

The following were some of the spiritual principles that were followed by Cardinal Merry del Val:

"Pray slowly, but if you notice that you have said a prayer hastily or distractedly, do not repeat it, but ask God to give you the grace to do better another time."

"When you see that you have failed, at once make an act of the virtue contrary to the fault."

"God gives His graces at the moment when one needs them. We must not torment ourselves, foreseeing sacrifices which at the moment He is not asking of us. And we must not doubt that God will give us strength to do what He demands of us."

"Do not forget that unless you crucify yourself you will crucify Jesus Christ."

FOR THE WOMAN OF THE HOUSE

"WOMAN CAN'T THINK"

American womanhood has recently been insulted in a most cool and calculating way. The insult was handed out by a magazine that calls itself the "Woman's Home Companion." It is like the companion who whispers to you that the most suitable thing for you is suicide. The form of the insult reduces itself to the title above: without saying it in words, the editors of the "Companion" give the world to understand that women don't *think*, can't *think*, and should not be asked to *think*.

Of course the issue, in this case, is what the Companion of American womanhood calls "birth-control." It sets out to win American womanhood to birth-prevention in a big way. And it uses so much concealment of truth, misrepresentation of fact, and erroneous statement that one can almost hear the author of the editorials saying as he or she writes: "After all, women don't think and can't think; this will get by." Here are arguments given:

1. *Women who are poor should not have many children, and if they are very poor, they probably should not have any.* (For brevity, I quote the substance, not the exact wording of the arguments.) The woman who thinks will say at once: If society has to choose between making it economically possible for me to have my family and preventing me from having a family, it prefers the latter. It offers me moral (and eventually, perhaps, physical) sterilization, as a salve for poverty. . . . There's something inhuman about that—something illogical. . . . Perhaps I'm not supposed to think that far.

2. *Women who are afraid they might suffer or die from child-birth should be offered whatever contraceptives they desire.* The woman who thinks, comments: But what about the suffering and possible death, and the living death of nervous disease and psychological revulsion that can and often do follow from contraception? Why am I never told about the physical, mental and moral suffering from contraception, such as I see in the faces of other women, and hear spoken of by doctors who are not afraid to face facts?

3. *Women are to practice contraception because overpopulation is the cause of all the great evils in the world.* The woman who thinks looks up this topic of overpopulation in some reliable source and finds that exactly the contrary is the scientific truth: that underpopulation due to birth-prevention is leading many civilized nations straight towards oblivion. . . . But women are not supposed to look up scientific treatises. . . .

American women may swallow this hydra-headed insult if they want to. They may all become like Margaret Sanger, whose books fairly scream the charge that women can't think, they only feel. But we have a higher opinion of the thinking power of American women!

OPEN LETTER

TO A MERCHANT AT CHRISTMAS

Dear Friend:

I shall probably be called very foolish in writing this letter to you. As a matter of fact, it will contain many things that smack of insanity — because the world has come to look upon sanity as belonging only to those who think and act like the majority of their fellow-citizens. I do not know whether there are any citizens in the United States who think and act as this letter will suggest, and if there are any, they are certainly an almost indiscernible minority. Therefore, if you want sanity in the popular and accepted sense of the term, read no more of these particular lines.

You are a merchant, we shall say, and a Christian. You belong, let us say further, to that vanishing class of merchants who are independent, who own their own stores large or small, and, within the limits of social justice, run their business as they please. I am not speaking, therefore, to large corporations or chain store monopolies, because the insanity that causes one to speak to stone walls or dead men's bones has not yet afflicted me. I, a man and a Christian, speak to you, a man and a Christian, on common ground.

Christmas is in the offing. It is a feast that awakens diverse sentiments and emotions in different people. To the priest it is a time of unusual work, what with hundreds of confessions to be heard, sermons to be preached, baskets for the poor to be prepared, and a multitude of other routine things to do. To the rank and file of Catholics it means Confession, Communion, a deep spiritual joy and gratitude overflowing into benevolence and deeds of kindness towards others. To the merchant — ah! to him it means a "fat take" from the increased shopping and gift-giving that the season inspires.

To some merchants, we realize, this will mean an opportunity to adjust losses sustained at other times of the year. If it helps him to pay his debts and continue in business and support his family, it has done well, and he may rightly attribute his redemption from bankruptcy to the Christ who came primarily to redeem men from hell.

But to others, already doing well in their business, it will mean an opportunity for raking in a neat pile that they do not need and would

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not have acquired had it not been for the coming of Christ to redeem the world. It will be a case of getting rich by reason of the fact that Christ became poor in a stable. It will be an exception to the universal rule: for, whereas the coming of Christ induces most men almost to impoverish themselves in giving to others in emulation of Christ, who gave Himself to men, the prosperous merchant climbs up on the backs of these self-impoverishing Christians to an eminence of new wealth and luxury and ease. We respectfully submit that the merchant who calls himself a Christian should feel keenly the anomaly of such a situation and evade it by any drastic action within his power.

THREE is no end of drastic action possible to relieve a situation that cannot but be harrowing to the Christian merchant. If he has a fine sense of spiritual integrity, he will say at once, when he sees an increased volume of Christmas business skyrocketing his profits: "This business represents many a sacrifice and much noble-hearted generosity on the part of my customers. It proves the genuineness of their faith in Christ, because it shows that they actually believe that what they give to others they give to Him. Indeed, it seems to be a universal characteristic of real faith in Christ to want to give rather than to receive; to be able to grow poorer rather than richer for the sake of others as He grew infinitely poor when He was born in the stable. I call myself a Christian; and therefore may I be so and so and so, may it happen thus and thus and thus to me, if I have to stand alone in growing richer off the sacrifices of the poor Christ and His poor followers during this holy season."

As a result of his meditation and logical summing up of the situation, our Christian merchant will get down to practical applications. He will estimate his normal monthly income during the year, and will set that as the amount to be realized during December. All over and above that he will earmark in advance for purposes that fit the character of the Christmas season.

Then the fun will begin. For a Christian merchant who argues thus with himself will have an unlimited amount of real fun.

A certain sum, for instance, can be set aside for what may be called "spot disbursements" in the daily running of his store. To illustrate what I mean: In the day's ordinary business every merchant and clerk sees all kinds of people enter his establishment. Some are well-to-do

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and patronizing; some are critical and cranky; some are suspicious and mistrustful. But some are very poor, yet thoughtful and honest. Often these latter come into the store, and you can see the vicarious joy in their eyes as they look over the expensive articles on display. You can almost see them thinking about Mother or Dad or the sick sister in a far-off city, or a sweetheart, as they pass up and down the aisles drinking in the beauty of all that they see. Then with a cheerful shrug, they turn to the very cheap articles and pick out one of them for a quarter or a half dollar. Can anyone imagine a greater joy for a merchant than to accept the quarter and then give such a customer not a "quarter" article, but one worth three or four or five dollars. If it were a child buying something for a parent the joy would be all the greater. (Do I hear somebody say: "Such an idea of business! Impossible!" Whoever said that, shouldn't be reading these lines. He was warned to stop at the first paragraph of this letter.)

OR TAKE the possibilities contained in disbursing the extra December "take" among one's employees. An independent merchant usually gets to know something about the men and women who work for him. He will know, for instance, that one is supporting a sick mother and, though being paid fairly well, cannot get married just for that reason. Another, a father of a family, is having quite a hard time keeping up with a series of unusual "bad breaks"; sickness among his children, or various accidents and what not. Another is just trying to furnish a home and has not got beyond second-hand and fire-sale furniture. The merchant knows all these things, and shortly before Christmas has already estimated how much the December surplus is going to be, and divides up most of it among these employees. Of course, it won't be enough to pay for operations or fully furnish homes — but what a boost it will give to languishing human courage and what a reaction of joy it will bring to the giver! Sane people, according to the definition given above, will call it insanity: but that's what we promised in this letter.

Then there are the limitless possibilities that arise from the existence of poor hospitals, orphan asylums, homes for the blind, etc. Our Christian merchant gets to know these places quite well. He likes to call himself a personal friend of the little Sister who meets him in the waiting room of the asylum or home for the aged, and tells him heart-rending stories (but always with such a cheerful smile) of the Sisters'

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needs. He likes to slip in the kitchen door to put a bag of potatoes or a couple of cases of canned goods on the floor. He feels a great sense of security when he is told how daily he is remembered in many, many prayers and no one can tell him that those prayers have not actually brought down blessings of God upon him that he would never otherwise have known.

Thus does he dispose of every penny that the Christmas spirit is responsible for bringing into his hands. Men who know he does these things call him "the mad merchant"—but he does not mind because he knows that if madness be measured in that way, there was infinite madness housed in a stable near Bethlehem on Christmas night, when the King Who owned a universe disposed of it to become a poverty-stricken Babe. Either infinite madness or infinite love; and what does it matter if to a money-mad world the two things seem to be one and the same?

We wish you, Christian merchant, a happy Christmas, hoping you do not mind being called insane.

Sincerely,

D. F. Miller.

He Will Not Succeed

Who is faint-hearted.
Who shirks responsibility.
Who thinks fate is against him.
Who is discouraged by reverses.
Who does not believe in himself.
Who expects nothing but failure.
Who is always belittling himself.
Who is always anticipating trouble.
Who waits for something to turn up.
Who complains that he never had a chance.
Who is constantly grumbling about his work.
Who never puts his heart into anything he does.
Who blames circumstances or other people for his failures.
Who can do a poor day's work without a protest from his conscience.

Who expects to eliminate from his work everything that is disagreeable or distasteful.

Who is forever wishing he were doing something else instead of the thing he is doing.

Who shuts himself within his own little life so completely that he cannot take interest in anything outside of it.

Who thinks the times are always out of joint, and that he was not born at the right moment or in the right place.

— *The Southern Cross.*

INOCENTE

If you do not feel a tug of vicarious homesickness as you read this story, something has hardened your heart. The tragedy of Mexican exile appears most poignant at Christmas.

W. T. CULLEN

IT WAS the first Christmas Inocente should spend on this side and it bade fair to be the dreariest he had spent anywhere, with the unlovely brush stretching to where the eye could no longer see, and the mesquite scrawny and listless before the oncoming winds of December. He stood at the window looking out to where earth and sky seemed to meet, trying to peer far and beyond to the south where the sun lay over white adobe with walls thick and proof against the chill of winter, or in riotous bloom even at this late time of the year.

Here, *valgame*, there was no riot of bloom or colour, nor houses of white abode with walls thick and proof against the chill of winter, nor sleepy patios where burros might wander to the end of their tether, and children play, and palms wave in the kindly breezes hailing from the southern ocean.

Here was nothing but poor rent shacks with boards of dried pine, walls covered by tar-paper garnished in all too many chinks and gaps with patches of tin, and splints of erstwhile packing boxes, and odd bits from an all ill-spared kindling pile.

He sighed with the thought that soon it should be time for *posadas*, and lanterns would be agleam in the homeland lighting the Holy Pilgrims through the night, and groups would pass from door to door seeking shelter for the Child to come, and there should be joy and singing and making ready for the happy *Nochebuena*.

And yet the thoughts of those times were not altogether kind, the joys not unmixed with pains and griefs and sorrows; and here, perhaps, it was better, though all seemed cold and new and poor and strange, yet better, no doubt, in more ways than one. Who should tell?

There was Don Amadeo, his father, the gentleman and the grand sir at home, rich and bountiful in the old days, and now but one of the thousands, poor and haggard, and worried that they might have bread for a time; and Eulogio, his elder brother, striving to earn a living that

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had stood highest in the halls of the Escolar where paths of learning led on to fame and wealth in the courts of the land.

Maria Lidia, his sister, was nearby in the city, safely lodged with the Teresian Mothers, close under the wing of Madre Domitila, superior of the exiled nuns and aunt to the lonely children. And here with Inocente was but the little brother, Pepito, the youngest, with whom the father could not bear to part though kindly friends had opened their homes, and truly, with a woman's care, these should have been the better place.

The mother lay far away, in the burying field, beyond the town of Torreon, a witness to the faith as that sorrowful Virgin for whom she had been named, Maria de los Dolores.

AND so this should be their first Christmas in the new land, and how very much of another kind than those they had known in past years, though the lack of gifts and toys should not be felt the most, nor the want of so much else that always had been theirs, rather it was as if a door had been closed, shutting out cheer and warmth and the once happy life of the old home, and hope, for a time, had turned away and left them to their sorrow.

It was on a summers night a few years before, and the father had gone on a business trip, the mother and children there at home in the great house, that a small band of travel worn women had come to their dwelling, dressed poor and plainly, the shawls down about their faces, so that few should see in these the nuns from the grand Santa Teresita of the nearby city.

The bell at the *Zaguan* jangled but a moment in the still evening, the porter ran to throw back the gate, and in they came, footworn and weary, to beg shelter for the night, and ask, for the love of Christ, wherewithal to go on in their journey until they might reach the borders of the land of safety.

Don Amadeo would surely not refuse, and the mother brought them in and had them tended, and she, herself, brought food and made ready the lodgings, and closed the shutters about the house that prying eyes might not behold, for these were days of trial, and the hand of anti-christ lay heavy on the land. There were but eight of the sisters now, the eldest had told her, where before there had been eleven; but three of the younger nuns had not gotten away, left behind, perforce, to the mercies of the soldiery. Inocente had not known what that meant.

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The sisters took their supper, and with thanks to their hostess went to the rooms above, and this was the last of them Inocente had seen, for early the next morning they were up and forth, hoping and trusting to reach the shelter of the other side before their whereabouts might become known and more hardships should follow.

And then it all happened, as so many times before and since it has happened in that land where the powers of hatred and disbelief hold sway, stories that never reach the ears of American listeners, tales not told by the kept men of the press.

The children had been playing in the courtyard all the morning, and at one had come in for the midday meal; the child mind of Inocente could still remember things said at that last dinner in the old home, the laughing and talking all the way through to the *postres*, the wonder wrought by the visit of their last evening's guests, the hopes and prayers that these should come at last to safety.

THERE came a noise without as if a body of horsemen were moving along the road, and through the open door the beat of horses' hoofs drew closer until a cry rang out, and once again the bell was pulled as on the night before, and there was an order to move forward, and in a moment's time the courtyard was swarming with mounted guard.

The mother gathered the girl and the youngest to herself, and went through the passage to meet the captain and his henchmen, who were already in the house, the leader drawing from his bosom a paper which he unrolled with a flourish, and then, as the woman stood facing him with the children about her, asking the meaning of this outrage upon their home, he read the writ by which they were to be driven forth, and their holdings and belongings seized of the government, for having given shelter and the means of comfort to persons not friendly to the good of the state, and in a way forbidden by the law of cult.

There was no gainsaying the charge; they had been spied upon or betrayed, it mattered little which, and there was small hope of turning aside the blow, worse than useless to plead mistake or misunderstanding: the hounds of the law had come too swiftly upon the traces of their quarry, and this was of a piece with all the ruthless havoc they would work in the chase.

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The law of cult was the smug name that covered this wholesale theft and rapine and all under cloak of the common good, for which the men who fathered the fraud cared not a whit; for if ever the rights of a free people were under the thumb of a few that sat back in vast homes and lodges, laughing at the world, joining hands with their kind in other lands, and snubbing the voice of protest, it was here in Mexico in the days, not altogether passed, that bred such deviltry as this.

Not a thing, not a comb, not a trinket could the mother or children take from the house, and barely let out with what they had about them, they made their way to the little home of the mayordomo until they might seek aid of other friends living within the city.

A sorrowful homecoming it was for Don Amadeo that evening, though they had looked to warn him, but he came earlier than they thought, and passing the cabin of the mayordomo he made straight for his home to be met at the outer gate by police standing guard, the government seal upon the door, and all right of entry denied him.

He came upon them after a time in the old cabin. He had gotten the gist of the story from a friendly *cuico* at the house, and far from upbraiding the wife for the fateful, kindly deed, he gave thanks to God for the safety of them all, and for having rendered help through them to those other poor, hunted souls in their hour of need. And on the morning following, a note was sent him by the bank, where he had done business but a day since, that his savings, a goodly sum, had likewise been laid hold of by agents of the government; and he was now, before the world, a ruined man.

He might file an appeal, carry the matter to court, ask, beg for redress, but to what end? The whole thing had been done time and again, and all the promises made, all the smooth replies, all the tangle of legal nonsense had come to naught. At times, other men had become too troublesome about these matters, and suddenly had met with further grief.

THE months that followed were not overpleasant as the family went from town to town, seeking harbor here and there, the father gathering together what loose ends had not been seized upon, scarcely enough, however, to afford them livelihood. And in the plains of Coahuila, on the road that leads to the great centre of Torreon, the mother fell sick and left them, and they wandered on, living somehow

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by the goodness of God, their friends kind but fearful, for trouble was still astir in the land, and, in spite of hopes and talk of pardon and the like, the watchword of the faithful was ever the same: *No confiamos en los del gobierno.* — Beware of the government.

So after a time, the wanderings becoming fruitless and hope well-nigh spent, the father, who had friends beyond, took the children and whatever was left or had been given them, and made for the country of the unknown, where peace, at least, would be their lot, and they might be suffered to live and gain for themselves whatever would be the worth of their striving.

Inocente did not understand all this; he remembered only the nuns that came and went in the night, the soldiers that had filled the yard, the pets and belongings that had been taken, the mother dying in a peon's poor *jacal*, the walking and the hunger of their journeyings, and, at last, the flight to safety.

Once he had asked, of a Sunday, why so many thousands of people were at Mass, filling the church and standing in thousands on the outside, and the mother had whispered that here there could be but one Padre, and he must say Mass for all these of the town and countryside; the law of cult would grant no more.

Again, he had thought it strange that the blinds and shutters must be drawn to say the evening rosary, until someone had said that if it were known, the same might happen as had happened at his father's house. And then, when a baby had come amongst his kinsmen, a man had been smuggled in, thin and pale and with a small moustache — though he knew this to be the Padrecito — who baptized the newcomer, and heard the confessions of all, and late that night said Mass in the home, and gave Communion, and went his way quietly as he had come.

SO HERE they were on the other side, living in a poor ranch house of a *compadre*, and though it was not at all as the old days had been, still there was something here that one could not seek for beyond, at least not as yet, for here was freedom, and the law gave no rights to rob, and the soldiery might not set upon one waking or sleeping, or bring one's father, at all times a marked man, to the *cuartel* for questioning, or perhaps worse.

Christmas night, they had said, there would be sung Mass in all the churches, and people would flock there in thousands, all in peace,

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and no law to cry them halt, and no need to brave the eye of soldiery, nor fear of lurking foe or false brethren; please God that there beyond this same peace and freedom would soon find place in the land.

The day might come when they could return, and even what had been theirs be given them once more, but as yet the dawn was still afar off; and meanwhile, here was peace of a kind, though one could not be glad or happy to have left one's home and people; still, they might breathe the air of freedom, and wait and hope and look for a time when the Lord of peace would plant firmly and forever the standard of peace in their unhappy country, and the forces of evil be routed, and the people of Christ again come into their own.

Away With Sadness

Popular impressions to the contrary notwithstanding, saints were cheery persons, and not only that, could lash out at sadness with fiery words. Here are some examples:

St. Francis de Sales: "Joy opens the heart and sadness shuts it. Sadness is like a hard winter which oppresses all the beauty of the earth and numbs the animals with cold." One day some one pointed out to St. Francis de Sales a man reputed to be very holy, but who always appeared gloomy. He said: "A sad saint is a sorry saint."

St. Alphonsus: "Sadness is the pest of devotion and a source of a thousand faults. The saints, even amidst torments and persecutions, did not know what it was to be sad. And why? Because they were united to the divine will. *Whatsoever shall befall the just man, it shall not make him sad.* (Prov.)

St. Francis of Assisi: "Spiritual joy is the surest defence against the thousand traps of the devil."

St. Teresa of Avila: "From sorry-faced saints, O Lord, deliver us."

Thirsty Youth

A famous University professor, according to Msgr. Matthew Smith, was induced by a large salary offer to quit a good post teaching at a large Eastern University to take a job as historical research man for the movies. Asked whether he missed the classroom or not, he answered that he did not.

"Most people," he said, "picture collegians as youths eagerly drinking in knowledge. I found them to be young brats, defying me to teach them anything."

THE SAINT OF SORE EYES

There are few fields of research more interesting than tracing back through history the origin of particular devotion to particular Saints. St. Lucy's feast is December 13th.

W. M. McINERNEY

IN THE year 304, in this once renowned city of Syracuse, on the Island of Sicily, a beautiful maiden, consecrated to God by a vow of virginity, died a martyr's death. Almost immediately was verified the oft-repeated paradox: To die is to live. Though her body passed from this life at the point of the sword wielded by the tyrant's henchman, and her pure soul returned to the God from whom it came, her name lived on, enshrined in the hearts of her fellow-christians, graven on the pages of the Church's liturgy. For centuries she had been honored in the Canon of the Mass, eloquent tribute to her sanctity, eloquent witness to the esteem in which she was held by the early Christian Church. Her name was Lucy.

Today, despite the world-wide reverence paid her name morning after morning at Christian altars, St. Lucy is almost unknown. She is not, however, without some devoted followers: for more than one man or woman, boy or girl have found in the virgin-martyr of Syracuse a powerful helper in their particular trials and difficulties, a powerful advocate to plead their case for others before the throne of grace. It has been my good fortune to know one such client well. To him I owe my interest in St. Lucy. In the hope that others too may become interested: that they may learn to know and love and appreciate this truly great saint of God, her story is here presented.

These words, be it confessed, have had a source of inspiration. It came in the form of a letter received a few weeks ago in which, among other things, the following question was asked:

"Who is the saint of sore eyes?"

Perhaps I should have been able to answer the question off-hand. The fact remains, I could not. Upon investigation, however, I found the patron saint of those afflicted with eye diseases, to be none other than St. Lucy. The saint of sore eyes! That question and its answer set me thinking: surely here was a saint whom the world could use, a

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patron whom it would pay all of us to know better, and pay — let us note it well — in more ways than one.

But let us, first of all, hear her story.

ST. LUCY was born of noble parents in Syracuse about the year 287. Her father died while she was yet in infancy; but Eutychia, her mother, took care to educate her properly and, despite the persecution then raging everywhere in Roman lands under the Emperors, Diocletian and Maximian, instructed her well in the doctrines and practices of the Christian Faith. So well did she succeed in her task that, before Lucy had reached the age of fourteen, she had secretly bound herself to her Divine Master Jesus Christ by a vow of perpetual virginity. Unaware of her daughter's vow, Eutychia began to look for a suitable marriage partner for her. The choice finally fell upon a youth of the same city, an ardent suitor, rich, and of noble birth, but a pagan. Lucy, however, refused to respond to his attentions. Having dedicated herself to her beloved Master, she desired no other suitor: and now awaited only a favorable opportunity to reveal her resolution to her mother.

The opportunity soon presented itself. For years Eutychia had suffered from a serious hemorrhage without being able to find an effectual remedy. Lucy, therefore, persuaded her to make a pilgrimage to the tomb of the glorious virgin St. Agatha, martyred a half-century before at Catania, and there in the very spot where God had been pleased to work many miracles, implore her cure. Accordingly they journeyed together to Catania. Arriving there, they went at once to the martyr's tomb and prostrated themselves in prayer. While they prayed, Lucy, overcome perhaps by the fatigue of the journey, fell into a deep sleep. During her sleep St. Agatha appeared to her, "surrounded by a choir of angels, clad in precious stones, and brighter than the sun," and said:

"O my sister-handmaid of Christ! Well art thou called Lucy, who art indeed a light and mirror to the faithful. What dost thou ask of me which shall not be granted to thine own faith and sanctity?"

The saint then assured Lucy that God would work the desired cure and that, for having preserved her virginity inviolate. He would reward her in Syracuse with the same glory she herself (St. Agatha) enjoyed at Catania.

Hearing these words, Lucy awoke joyously from her vision and found her mother cured. More confirmed than ever now in her resolu-

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tion always to remain a virgin, she told her mother to think no more of marriage, but rather to distribute their fortune among the poor. Eutychia was greatly disturbed at this request. Nevertheless she replied:

"My child, I am content. Do with all my possessions as thou wilt. Only let me die first, lest during my lifetime I become a beggar."

Lucy, however, answered to the effect that gratitude for her miraculous cure ought to induce her willingly to deprive herself during life of that which, at her death, she must necessarily leave behind her.

"Surely, Mother," she said, "God hath little care for that which is dedicated to His service only when we can no longer enjoy it. What doth it profit to leave behind that which we cannot carry away?"

Seeing the wisdom of her daughter's words, the mother consented. They returned to Syracuse and began to sell their property and to distribute the proceeds among the poor. When Lucy's suitor learned what was happening he complained bitterly to Eutychia. But finding every complaint and protest useless he denounced the girl to Paschasius, the governor, as being a Christian, contrary to the imperial edict.

PASCHASIUS had her brought before him and commanded her to sacrifice to the idols; and when she refused to comply he ordered her to be carried off to a place of shame, there to be dishonored and humbled to his will. Lucy, however, could not be cowered by this prospect:

"My body," she bravely declared, "is in thy power; but know that there can be neither sin nor shame in that to which the mind does not consent. If thou shouldst cut off my hand and with it offer incense to thine idols, God would not impute it to me as sin. Thou mayest not force my will, for that is beyond thy power."

Then Paschasius, blind with rage, commanded his guards to drag her away. But as the guards advanced to carry out the order, Lucy suddenly, by the power of God, was rendered immovable. They could not budge her from the spot. Ropes were brought and fastened to her waist, her arms, and legs. Men and oxen pulled with all their might. The more they pulled, the more firmly she stood rooted to the spot. The magicians and enchanters were called. They employed all their spells and enchantments, but they also failed. More confused and infuriated than ever, the governor ordered a great fire to be lighted

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around her: Lucy, however, prayed to God that the fire might not harm her "so that the enemies of Christ might be confounded." The friends of the governor, unwilling that the people should witness another miracle, advised him to have her beheaded. But instead, one of his servants seized a sword and pierced her throat. Even then the saint did not die immediately. She threw herself on her knees before the crowd and offered her death to God. Then, after foretelling the cessation of the persecution and the future peace of the Church, she passed from life to death, and from death to eternal life. It was in the year 304, just nine years before the victory of Constantine at the Milvian Bridge and the beginning of the reign of peace.

HERE we have the story of St. Lucy as it has come down to us through the ages. Many of the details, it is true, are difficult to substantiate. Many perhaps—it is hard to say for certain—are purely legendary. But the essential facts of her holy life and heroic death cannot be questioned and the Church recognizes them as facts by permitting her cult and assigning her a special feast day on the liturgical calendar (December 13) to be celebrated with the Mass and Office of a virgin-martyr.

The story, however, fails to explain why St. Lucy has become "the saint of sore eyes." That explanation must be sought in the name she bore, *Lucy*. The name Lucy comes from the Latin *Lucia*, derived from "lux" meaning *light*. Hence the reason why St. Agatha could say to her in the vision at the tomb: "Well art thou called Lucy, who art indeed a light and a mirror to the faithful." In an endeavor to give symbolic expression to her name some of the earlier painters had recourse to a peculiar device: they pictured her bearing her two eyes before her on a dish or silver tray. As a result of this practice, and the wonder it evoked, a legend was evolved that adds another incident to the chain of events that made up the story of her life. The legend is as follows:

"In the city wherein the Blessed Lucy dwelt, there dwelt also a youth who, having once beheld her, became enamoured of her beauty, and by messages and promises and gifts, he ceased not to woo her. But Lucy, being a Christian and fearing God, resisted all these attacks on her virtue. Now this youth . . . was accustomed to protest that it was the brightness of her eyes which inflamed him, and that it was

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for the sake of those beautiful eyes he pursued her, leaving her no rest because those eyes left him no rest by day or by night. Lucy, considering these things and calling to mind the words of Christ, "If thine eye scandalize thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee," and fearing lest her eyes should be the cause of damnation to the young man, and perhaps also to herself, called for a knife and took out her beautiful eyes and sent them to her lover on a dish, with these words: "Here hast thou what thou hast so much desired; and for the rest, I beseech thee, leave me now in peace." Whereupon the young man, being utterly astonished and full of grief and remorse, not only ceased his pursuit, but became also a convert to Christ, and lived ever afterwards an example of virtue and chastity.

"But God would not suffer that Blessed Lucy should remain blind: for one day, as she knelt in prayer, behold! her eyes were restored to her more beautiful than before. . . . And this is the reason that St. Lucy is invoked against blindness and all diseases of the eyes, and that in her effigy she is represented bearing two eyes in a dish."

We are not here concerned with the fact that this legend lacks historical evidence. What does concern us is that Lucy really is a saint of God, a great and glorious saint, an example to the whole world of purity, charity, and heroic fortitude, a saint whom all who are weak and troubled in this warfare of life (and who is not?) would do well to invoke and imitate.

MORE than that, St. Lucy has a special office which the devoted faithful of another age have given her: the patron saint to be invoked in all diseases of the eyes, an office that must be very pleasing to her who on earth so loved the suffering and afflicted as to give them all that she had of this world's goods.

Therefore, if anyone happens to be suffering from eye-trouble of any kind, let him use this remedy. First of all, let him do the obvious things, the natural thing. Consult a doctor who is able to help. The supernatural does not destroy the natural, and the power of God works generally through natural causes. But, along with this natural means, let him pray to St. Lucy. She is his patron now, at least for the time being. She can help him, and she will help, if God, on Whom all things depend, judges it good for his soul. Her help may be given in an indirect way: simply by imploring God to guide aright the mind and hand of

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the doctor so that he will make the correct diagnosis and apply the proper remedy in the right way. Or it may happen that her aid will be more direct. She may, by her prayers, induce the God Whom she served so well in life, to work a cure — particularly in a case that is too far advanced for a doctor's help — independently of any natural remedy. This of course is a favor which, of itself, no one has a right to expect, but which faith and confidence may obtain if such be the will of God.

As "the saint of sore eyes," St. Lucy can also serve as a patron for doctors and nurses engaged in work of this kind, assisting them to do their work faithfully, to carry it on successfully, in a manner conducive to the welfare of their patients and to the glory of God.

Finally, one further application may be made: There is such a thing as eye-trouble in the spiritual order: spiritual blindness brought on by a habit of sin, countless spiritual ills that follow from a too unguarded use of the sense of sight. Here also St. Lucy may be our patron. In union with our Blessed Mother of Perpetual Help, she will, if we call on her, lay our troubles at the feet of the Divine Master, offer Him our prayers, and plead our cause.

A powerful patron is this "saint of sore eyes." Suppose we try her.

Hitler's Real Enemies

Expert observers of the international situation say that Adolf Hitler, despite his external advances and internal grip on Germany, has four major obstacles before him that will probably keep him from ever being perfectly secure. They are:

1. An exceedingly difficult economic situation that must be righted if it is not to blow up in the government's face. This is said to be the most dangerous of Hitler's enemies and is due to the fact that he has expended topheavy sums for public works and armaments.
2. The urge of the intellectual section of the population for democracy or at least for intellectual self-determination. It is the element most capable of counter-movements that is most irked by dictatorship and absolutism.
3. The repression that has been applied to churches, both Catholic and Protestant, which keeps a large part of his people in unrest.
4. The government's anti-Jewish campaign which has had international repercussions, not only affecting Germany's relations with other countries but her own economic situation as well.

“SILENT NIGHT”

One of the simplest of the world's true Christmas stories—but one that has brought the meaning of Christmas to millions of souls.

F. A. BRUNNER

A POET-PRIEST, a schoolmaster, and a broken organ combined to bring us the beautiful Christmas hymn, *Silent Night! Holy Night!*

It happened on the Christmas Eve of 1818 in the little village of Oberndorf, near Salzburg, Austria. Father Joseph Mohr, “vikar” or assistant in the tiny church of St. Nicholas, handed the schoolmaster a crumpled sheet of paper on which, in his bold laborious scrawl, he had written a little poem.

“See what you can do with it,” he said, almost indifferently. “It might make a nice hymn for the midnight singing.”

Schoolmaster Franz Gruber scratched his head. Yes, the words did have a fine ring to them:

“Silent night! holy night!
All is calm, all is bright—”

“Well, I can try to patch some music together,” he said thoughtfully. “But now I must look after that organ repairman from the Zillerthal. See you after supper, Herr Vikar.”

But the young organist was just a bit doubtful. The organ at the parish church was broken and would probably be useless that night. To carry over the old spinet from his schoolroom at Arnsdorf was out of the question. The whole program he had prepared for the midnight Mass seemed doomed to failure.

As the organist-schoolmaster trudged the two miles to Arnsdorf through the brittle snow, he could not help thinking of the poem the priest had given him. Great silver-grey clouds shining at the verge welled up over the fir-tops and seemed to spread a calm over the tinkling sky; reminded him of the spreading calm and brightness the poet spoke of. Franz hated to disappoint his friend.

BREATHLESS and tingling with the chill, the schoolmaster clambered up the slippery steps of the Arnsdorf schoolhouse, almost fell on the uneven tile of the open hallway, and then settled contentedly before the huge porcelain stove of the main room. Here in the warmth, matters somehow began to look less uncertain than they had out in the crisp cold. He scratched around on his desk for a music pad, dipped a quill into the inkwell, and began to write out the poem under the stave. The words almost hummed themselves into a tune. "Silent night! holy night! All is calm, all —" The schoolmaster's pen began to scrape across the paper. "Sol—la—sol—mi . . . re—re—ti—ti—do—do—sol—sol." Visions of the cold crib all bright with the God-head kept hovering along the ridge of his brows. The hour he spent over his quill and pad seemed like the happy moment when the angels had first sung their message to the lowly shepherds on Bethlehem's hills.

It was done! The music kept sounding in his ears, still and sweetly. Franz Gruber's face beamed with a happy satisfaction. There came into his movements a hastiness quite strange to so methodical a man. Out of the door he rushed, forgetting his cap; back again to fetch it. He spied his guitar and fastened the green strap over his shoulders as he rushed out once more into the chill.

The two miles to Oberndorf were far too long. Father Mohr must hear the song at once.

"It's finished, Herr Vikar — needs only to be arranged for the chorus tonight! Here, let's sing it together; you take the melody and I'll strum along on the guitar."

As they sang and played together, the dark young priest and the spare young schoolmaster, the words of the poem took on new meaning and new force. There was no need to ask whether the Father was pleased. The fervor of his singing and the twinkle in his eyes told you that.

AND so that night, when, one after the other, the bells of the churches struck the happy hour of twelve in a tumbling cascade of friendly disagreement, the beautiful Christmas song was sung for the first time from the gallery of the church of St. Nicholas. The schoolmaster strummed on his guitar — for the organ was still unrepaired, and two high treble voices lifted into glowing sound the

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tender words "Silent night! holy night!" And when the whole choir of men and boys took up the melody, it was as though the angels took up the song and swelled the music from the blue, star-set gloom outside.

That was Christmas 1818. The villagers heard the song and were enraptured. The organ repairman from Zillerthal heard it and was struck by the beauty of the air. He carried the melody home with him. Four girls from the Zillerthal, Strasser by name, heard the organ builder's version, and immediately embodied it in their concert repertory. And so the melody was carried from the little church of St. Nicholas and the tiny valley of the Salzach out into the great towns of Europe and all the world.

Not In Webster

Times change, and words change with them. Father Stedman gives this list of definitions, which will not be found in Webster or Funk and Wagnalls, but which are listed in the "dictionary of life":

CHRISTIAN: A name applied to many sects that have no Christ in them.

MAY DAY: It means "Mary Day" but it is thought of all over the world today as a Big Day for Communists.

MARRIAGE: A state you must be in, before you can get a divorce.

CHRIST: "A word my father uses when he is mad," says a little boy.

SWASTIKA: An ancient, respectable cross emblem, now used as the "mark of the beast" on man.

PEACE PACTS: Promises of peace which nations make before blowing each other to pieces.

CHRISTMAS: Nothing to do with "Christ" or "Mass" but the big business season for department stores.

CONSCIENCE: "Something in me," as the little girl said, "which tells me Johnnie is doing wrong."

Just Contrary

A Pennsylvania restaurant owner was seriously inconvenienced by the fact that his customers carried away his menus for souvenirs. So he had some printed with the inscription on each one: "Souvenir menu—Take this with you." He hasn't lost a menu since.

Catholic Anecdotes

STUPIDITY

As the Emperor Napoleon lay dying in exile, he returned to the religion of his youth. He gave orders that when his last agony approached, the Blessed Sacrament was to be exposed, and the prayers for the dying recited. He said that he desired to fulfill all the duties of his Catholic faith.

As he said these words, Antommarchi, the surgeon attending him, who paraded as an atheist, could not repress a scornful smile. Napoleon, with some of his old time fire, rose up and said to him:

"You may leave my room. I can forgive shallow wits or even bad manners, but stupidity fatigues me. I cannot forgive dullness of heart."

THE BUILDER

Our Lord once appeared to St. Thomas, the Apostle, so the legend has it, at Caesarea, and said to him:

"The King of the Indies, Gondoforus, has sent a messenger to seek for a builder who shall make him a palace grander than that of the Emperor at Rome. I wish you to be that builder. Go to the King, I will inspire you."

So Thomas went to the domains of Gondoforus and received his commands.

"I am going to a far country," said the King, "but I will leave you much gold and silver. Build me such a palace as the world has never seen."

But Thomas, finding much misery and suffering among the people, gave the king's money to the poor. When the king returned, he was very angry, and ordered Thomas to be thrown into prison. He was thinking on what manner of death would be most suitable as a punishment for his "architect," when one day his dearly-loved brother, who had died shortly before, appeared to him.

"My brother, this man is God's own servant," he said. "I have been admitted to Paradise, and the angels showed me a wonderful palace of gold and precious stones. 'This,' they said, 'has the builder Thomas built for the King, your brother, if he will have it.'"

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The King ran to the prison, and opening the door with his own hand, bade Thomas come forth. Thereupon the Apostle said:

"Knowest thou not that they who would possess heavenly things must not set their hearts on the perishable things of this world? There are many palaces in heaven, but they can only be purchased by acts of love and charity done here."

THE FOLLY OF THE WISE

The celebrated astronomer, Kirchner, had a friend who used to say that he did not believe in God, and that the world came into existence of itself.

One day this friend came to visit Kirchner, and saw a beautiful globe standing on his table.

"This is a beautiful piece of workmanship," he said admiringly. "Where did you buy it?"

"Oh," returned the astronomer, "it made itself."

"Don't be ridiculous. That is impossible."

"So likewise is it impossible that this world of ours came into existence of itself. Why do you believe it?"

EXCHANGE

A certain rich man was very near death from blood-poisoning in his arm. The priest was called, and urged him to restore some property which he had acquired unjustly.

"I cannot do so," replied the sick man, "for if I do, I will leave my three sons penniless."

Thereupon the priest remarked, calmly.

"I know a cure for your sickness, but it is a very costly one!"

"Tell me about it, by all means," cried the dying man.

"It is simply this: some living person must allow his hand to be burnt, and, while raw, to be laid on your arm."

The three sons were called, but none of them would do this for their father. Then the priest said:

"See, none of your children would hold his hand in the fire a few moments for you, and you are willing to endure the torture of hell-fire for all eternity, just for their sake!"

Pointed Paragraphs

TIME TO PREPARE

The world has much in common with the Catholic Church though the world does not know it and would not admit it even though it did know it. We could list a dozen practices that have been taken over by modern pagans which are strictly Christian in their origin and purpose. Such practices depart from the Christian only in the motive with which they are performed. Advent is one.

In a short time almost every newspaper in the country will begin carrying a notice on the front page: "Only ten more days to shop—only nine more days to shop," and so on, right down to the great day of Christmas itself. What is the purpose of that notice? To inform the people that they had better get busy and prepare for Christmas by buying appropriate gifts and presents for their relatives and friends. And people do get busy too. The days that precede Christmas are days of clogged traffic, packed stores, and crowded streets. Everybody is preparing.

The Catholic Church has the same practice. She had it long before newspapers and department stores were conceived. She wants her people to prepare for Christmas too, but not merely by going down town and purchasing a bag full of toys and trinkets for the children and a new pipe for dad. She wants them to get ready for the great day by contemplating the meaning of that day and by preparing their hearts for the coming of the Saviour. Advent to the Catholic is a time of longing and waiting, of dusting and cleaning. That is why the Church decrees that most of the Masses said during these days be said in violet vestments. Violet is the color that reminds us that penance must be done before Christmas if peace and joy are to be had on Christmas. It is the old, old story of a fast preceding a feast.

Thus penance and prayer should form the texture of our life during these days of Advent. If they do, our gift-giving will have the proper motive, and will not only be after the manner of the little Infant Who gave the first gift — Himself — but will be meritorious for heaven. We fear that many of the Advent practices of the world are not meri-

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torious for heaven. "Giving" is only for the sake of giving and not for the sake of Christ Who started the practice of giving. Perhaps the reason is this — people have forgotten the meaning of Christmas.

FACTS — AND THE ISSUE

There is so much befuddlement in many minds concerning the issues involved in a campaign for social justice, that it is difficult to get agreement even on the objectives that are desirable. It is so easy to point out situations and circumstances that seem to indicate the perfection of the economic principles that have up to now ruled the nation, that many a man will not give even a moment's thought to the desirability or possibility of a change.

However, it is hard to believe that any man, be he monopolist, millionaire, or small business man, cannot agree that something must be done to effect a change when he merely contemplates the facts that create the issue. These facts abstract from local conditions, from particular instances of justice and generosity, from evils that are bound to arise from any nation-wide attempt to elevate the condition of labor. The facts are these, as quoted by Monsignor Haas in his talk to nurses and social workers at the recent Eucharistic Congress in New Orleans:

"In 1935 and 36, 14 per cent of the 29,000,000 families of the country had an annual income of less than 500 dollars; 42 per cent less than 1,000 dollars; and 65 per cent less than 1,500 dollars. Beneath these figures lie vast areas of unattended illness, undernourishment, discouragement, unspeakable housing conditions, and unsatisfactory family life. Again and again exact studies have shown that as family incomes decrease, sickness and mortality rates increase. It is common knowledge that at least ten million families are living in quarters unfit for human habitation."

If a copy of this statement were printed in large letters and placed above the desk of every executive in this country and pondered several times every day, we would have far less of the selfish obstructionist tactics against social justice that are used. The bare thought that almost half of the families in America are trying to live on less than twenty dollars a week sends shivers up and down the spine of anyone who is not emotionally and morally dead.

This fact will inspire industrialists who are paying living family wages to campaign for the payment of such wages by other indus-

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trialists, until that 42 per cent of nineteen-dollar-a-week family supporters is reduced to the vanishing point.

It will put an end to the blandly destructive criticism of men who pharisaically say they want social justice, but invariably detest the methods of others to attain it.

It will silence those shallow thinkers, Catholics and otherwise, who like to point to high standards of living among *some* laborers, or to the laziness and shiftlessness of *other* laborers, as an argument against any change in the American economic set-up.

If not convinced by the fact, we recommend that the objectors try the experiment of supporting a family for one month on nineteen dollars a week or less.

RADIO RESPONSIBILITY

There is a moral connected with the startling story of how thousands of American citizens were recently deceived by a radio program into thinking that a terrible war had broken out against the United States.

The facts are these: A broadcasting chain put out over the air a dramatization of H. G. Wells' fantastic novel "War of the Worlds," describing a mass invasion of the country with new death dealing weapons that could kill everything within miles. The program was realistic and before it was over, transmitting stations were being deluged with telegrams and telephone calls pleading for means of deliverance from this latest and worst of all wars.

The incident brought out in a striking manner the gullibility of thousands of our citizens. Thereon hangs the moral. A war scare is something that brings out into the open the reactions of people. Even though in this instance it was but an imaginary war, they were "taken in," and moved to action against the horrible thing.

If the dramatization of an imaginary war has such an effect, who cannot see what effect other anti-social programs must have, even though they are not of the kind that may call forth public expressions of the reactions caused?

If the radio stations permit advertisers to hawk their products as absolutely necessary for health, as the only means of averting an early death — how many persons are driven to procure the nostrum not

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because they need it, but because they have a craven fear that to be without it means death?

If the radio stations permit broadcasts that even by innuendo and delicately worded hints cast doubts on the value of chastity, how many individuals take the hints as a gospel, and destroy the barriers that separated them from impurity before?

If the radio stations permit the glorification of crime and criminals even though with the avowed thesis that "crime does not pay," how many callow youths forget the thesis and go out looking for the glory?

We may call the public gullible when it falls for an imaginary description of a war. But knowing that gullibility, we have a terrifying social responsibility in deciding what kind of programs shall be permitted to go over the air.

SMOKE-SCREEN

We hold no brief for persecutors of any shape or form, be they persecutors of Jews or persecutors of gentiles. Persecution never serves the purpose for which it is instituted. History attests this fact. We cannot but feel horror-stricken and disgusted at the harsh treatment meted out to the Jews and Catholics in Nazi Germany. Only debased and barbarian minds could conceive such cruelty as is being heaped upon the heads and homes of minority groups in that sad country.

But here let us sound a warning. Whence are we receiving the news of Germany's persecution? Mainly from the newspapers. Are the newspapers entirely reliable? No one who reads with any discernment at all will admit it. When even the conservative and "vowed to impartiality" New York Times can disfigure and color news as did that paper in its reporting of the Spanish War, then anything is possible.

The campaign against Fascism began shortly after the opening of the Spanish War, and not only Franco but everything anti-Communist was dubbed "Fascist." The campaign grew as world events added fuel to the fire. The papers repeated day after day in shocking headlines or in two and three column stories the latest atrocities of the Fascists, whether such atrocities were as frightful as one would be led to suppose, or not. Impressions were given, insinuations were made, assumptions were laid down as facts, and accusations were hurled till the minds of the people were so filled with hatred for the barbarous Fascists that only

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extra details of policemen prevented rioting and bloodshed in German centers in the United States.

Meanwhile, where are the Communists? What are we reading about them in the daily papers besides the reports of the Dies Committee that would make everybody who has anything to do with labor appear a Communist? Have they backtracked on their plans for a world revolution? They are silent; and so are the papers. There is something deep and dark in this silence. What is it?

We know that the "Fascist" bogey is a particularly brilliant turn of Soviet propagandists. If Fascism is made to appear as the greatest scourge that ever struck the earth men will come to hate it so thoroughly that they will ally themselves willingly with any force that attempts to destroy it even though that force be the "Popular Front." Thus Communism will rise out of the ashes of Fascism.

We do not condone the crimes of Nazis. Their insane persecuting of Jew and Catholic is to be regretted and condemned. Low has fallen civilization when a so-called civilized nation must resort to such uncivilized measures to retain its "civilization." But let us in America beware of the proverbial smoke screen that our enemies would cast before our eyes. We would do little in the defense of freedom and democracy if we destroyed Fascism only to make the way clear for Communism. For, much as Fascism is to be condemned, we believe that Communism is a more diabolic persecutor and murderer than Fascism. After all, Communism by its very nature is against God and the things that flow from God; Fascism is against God and the things that flow from God only by the decrees of its leaders.

THE LEGION MARCHES ON

From November, 1937, to October, 1938, five hundred and eighty feature length motion pictures have been reviewed by the National Legion of Decency. So says the report of the Episcopal Committee on Motion Pictures of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

Of those 580 pictures, 345 were rated as Class A, Section I, unobjectionable for general patronage; 194 as Class A, section 2, unobjectionable for adults; 32 as Class B, objectionable in part, and 7 as Class C, condemned.

This summary reveals the immensity of the task that has been accomplished directly and indirectly, by the Legion of Decency. Shortly before its campaign was inaugurated, the brand of motion pictures being

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produced would have had to be catalogued in just about the inverse ratio: 7 unobjectionable for general audiences, and several hundred objectionable in whole or in part.

However this is one of those campaigns that must go on in perpetuity. Eternal vigilance is the only means of keeping the movies clean and wholesome. The vigilance is made a much easier task by the fact that so few pictures are condemned: no one can argue that it requires too much self-denial to avoid those few.

Of course, as we have said before, pictures listed under Class B should bear the designation "Condemned" as well as those in Class C. We could never quite understand the logic of dividing pictures into those that are objectionable as a whole and those objectionable in part. A principle well known to every Catholic thinker is this: "*Malum ex aliquo defectu.*" In other words, a thing is bad if it is bad in part. As a matter of fact, it is just about impossible to find a picture that is totally reprehensible; that has nothing good in it at all. But that is not necessary; if there is anything morally bad in it, it must be called a bad picture.

So we should like to see the unreal distinction between "objectionable in part" and "totally objectionable" done away with. The distinction may too easily become the wedge for introducing more and more moral filth into pictures without rating the judgment: "Condemned." Let us be honest, realistic, and logical: and condemn where condemnation is deserved.

SPEEDY CONVERSION

Two priests, according to a dispatch, were sitting in a car in a street in Providence, Rhode Island, when the recent hurricane struck the east coast. Their automobile was picked up and tossed into a nearby reservoir. One of the priests was drowned.

The other, rising to the surface, saw another man struggling with the raging water. He swam to his assistance. The man said he was afraid to die. The priest asked him if he was a Catholic, and on being answered in the negative, asked further whether he would like to die as a Catholic. A fervent affirmative was the response to this.

So the priest gave him a few hurried instructions about Catholic belief in between the dodging of waves and arm-lashing to keep afloat. Finally, with plenty of water at hand, he baptized him.

Both priest and newly baptized are recovering.

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EXCERPTS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ST. ALPHONSUS

ST. ADALBERT

St. Adalbert was born in Bohemia, of noble parentage, about the middle of the tenth century. His father, a Slavonian, sent him to study at Magdeburg, under the care of the Archbishop Adalbert.

This prelate conceived for him the tenderness of a father, and gave him his name in admitting the youth to confirmation. Young Adalbert was a child of the Blessed Virgin. Being yet an infant, he was attacked by a violent illness that reduced him to extremity. His parents then carried him to the church, placed him on the altar of the Virgin Mary, and promised to consecrate him to the service of God if he should recover his health. Their prayers were heard.

Adalbert, having remained nine years in school, made considerable progress in human sciences, but still more in the science of the saints; for whatever time was allowed for recreation, he spent in holy prayer, in relieving the poor, and visiting the sick. Having made a copious collection of books, consisting chiefly of the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, he returned to Bohemia and entered the ecclesiastical state at Prague. Diethmar, bishop of that city, was greatly enamoured of his virtue and ordained him sub-deacon shortly before his death.

An assembly was held to propose a successor, at which the prince of Bohemia and other grandees were present, and, by unanimous consent, Adalbert was chosen. Notwithstanding all his reluctance, and

his pleas of unworthiness and youth, he was obliged to accept the onerous charge; our saint received the episcopal consecration at the hands of Villegisus, Archbishop of Mayence. He immediately proceeded to Prague to take possession of his see. In assuming the government of his Church, his extraordinary piety became manifest; for on all festivals he distributed abundant alms, and supported twelve poor people continually. He slept upon the bare floor, or upon sack-cloth, and passed a considerable part of the night in prayer. His continual preaching, and frequent visits to the sick and prisoners, manifested how totally he was devoted to the glory of God and the welfare of his flock.

But they treated his admonitions with an obstinacy surpassing the enthusiasm with which they had at first hailed his arrival; and Adalbert accordingly resolved to leave them, having first consulted, and obtained permission from Pope John XV. His first intention was to make a pilgrimage on foot to the Holy Land; but on his arrival at Monte Cassino, the Abbot and some of the monks induced him to remain with them for some time, until it became known who he was; whereupon the holy bishop proceeded to Rome, and, by the advice of the Pope, received the religious habit in the monastery of St. Alexis. Here he lived in tranquility for three years and a half, until the Duke of Bohemia, moved by the wretched state of the Church at Prague, induced the Pope to send him back.

Promises were made to him later,

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but never fulfilled. So the saint again abandoned his rebellious flock, and went to preach the Gospel to the idolaters of Hungary. His success here, however, was not proportionate to his zeal; and the Bohemians continuing as obstinate as ever, he again returned to his monastery in Rome.

He was obliged by the Pope to repair a second time to Prague. The saint set out in obedience to this command; but being informed that his ungrateful flock had shown their implacable hatred of him by murdering his brothers, he requested the Duke of Poland to ascertain whether they were willing to receive him. The Bohemians replied: "Adalbert is a saint, and we are sinners; so it is impossible to expect that we can live quietly together."

The saint took this as sufficient exoneration from the solicitude of his Church, and went to undertake the conversion of the pagans who were then in Prussia.

After he had suffered many hardships on this mission, the idolaters one day assembled in great numbers, and demanded of him why he had entered their country. The saint replied that he had come for their salvation, and exhorted them to abandon the worship of idols, and to adore the true God. But the barbarians were displeased at his words, and Siggo, the priest of the idols, ran him through the breast with his lance, whereupon the others rushed upon him also, while the saint, raising his hands to heaven, prayed to the Lord for their conversion. The inhuman wretches placed his head upon a pole, and bore it away amid shouts of exultation. His martyr-

dom happened on the 23rd of April, of the year 997, and the Lord honored him by many subsequent miracles.

To understand how powerful is the intercession of St. Joseph with Jesus Christ, we need only know what the Gospel says, *and He was subject to them*. For thirty years, then, the Son of God most carefully obeyed Joseph and Mary. Joseph had only to indicate his will by a word or a sign, and he was immediately obeyed by Jesus. This humility of Jesus in obeying teaches us that the dignity of St. Joseph was above that of all the Saints, with the exception of the Divine Mother.

St. Jerome says that anger is the door by which all the vices enter the soul. Let us implore God to preserve us from anger. For he that submits to such a passion is exposed to the great danger of falling into grievous sin against God or his neighbor. Let us look on Jesus Crucified and we shall not dare to complain.

We can expect to obtain only those graces that we ask in the Name and through the merits of Jesus Christ. "But," says St. Augustine, "if we ask anything hurtful to our salvation it cannot be said to be asked in the Name of the Saviour." When we see that God does not give us temporal gifts, let us be assured that He refuses them only because He loves us, and because He sees that the things we ask would only injure our spiritual well-being.

Book Reviews

BIOGRAPHY

"*My Little Missionary*" Jacques Bernard. By Rev. E. Latourneau, O.M.I. Translated by Mary Agatha Gray. Published by Benziger Brothers. 121 pages. Price, \$1.25.

Jacques Bernard died on May 16, 1927, at Beloeil, Canada. During the nine short years granted him here on earth he ascended heights of sanctity and spiritual union with God not reached by most other people who have lived fifty, sixty, or even seventy years. From his earliest youth Jacques seemed to be under the special influence of God's grace, possessing a deep understanding of the truths of religion and a firm will in carrying out their implications. While he was not an effeminate boy in any sense of the word, the things dearest and nearest to his heart were those things that had to do with the soul, with eternity, with God. Hardly had he come to the use of reason when he was "saying Mass" in his home, or reciting the breviary, or preaching sermons to his mother and father and little brother. Even as a child it was his ambition to become one day a missionary. This was not to be; but we can be sure that Jacques by his prayers, his obedience to his parents, his purity, did much for the salvation of souls in pagan countries. The account of his life can serve parents better perhaps than anyone else. It was due in great measure to the strong faith of the boy's mother and father, to their untiring efforts to place in the heart and mind of their child the firm foundation of faith that he advanced so rapidly along the road of holiness. Were other parents to act in like manner, perhaps the child delinquency problem would be nearer settlement. From this little book they can take their inspiration.—E. F. M.

FICTION

Ann of Greystones. A novel by May A. Feehan. Published by P. J. Kennedy & Sons, New York. 227 pages. Price, \$2.00.

"Ann of Greystones" is a fitting title. The name, Ann, brings to mind an ordinary, wholehearted, generous girl of

Books reviewed here may be ordered through The Liguorian. These comments represent the honest opinions of the reviewers, with neither criticism nor deserving praise withheld.

our day. "Greystones" sounds mysterious, intriguing and opens the way to plot, adventure and difficulties. The ordinary Ann becomes less ordinary at Greystones but more wholehearted and more generous. It is really a story of houses in the sense of homes, two of them; the one a happy home of children and interested parents where love and loyalty and understanding abound, the other, and unhappy one of three persons who walk their separate ways through spacious and luxurious halls where one senses a meaningful silence of distrustful thoughts. Cheerful Ann leaves the happy home to take her rightful place in the unhappy one, and the story begins. For a short period it seems that even the warm heart of Ann must be chilled by the coldness that permeated Greystones, when the dying embers of charity in the embittered heart of young Thornton are kindled anew and the flame of unselfishness spreads to every member of the household. Thorn and Ann, Ted and Peg, become staunch friends who are frequently separated through circumstances that change the course of their existence. The plot goes on like a fascinating melody that flits about complicated chords only to come back to rest upon the simple tonic of charity. It ends on a pleasant note.

"Ann of Greystones" is a novel in every sense of the term. It holds interest, the extraordinary interest of ordinary life. It has a love theme that is intensely human and appealing and unlike the unnatural, sophisticated pagan novels of the present day. Mystery is woven into the plot, a natural though puzzling mystery which inevitably results when unlike temperaments are thrown together. Finally, there is a villain, the villain of misunderstanding who has wrecked so many lives but who is duly ousted from Greystones before his evilly laid plans can take effect.

This is an ideal novel for American youth in its teens. Would that millions of copies of "Ann Greystones" were sold to take the place of the numerous, un-

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wholesome exciting "western" and "Detective" and "romantic" magazines so nervously paged by our young boys and girls.—*G. H. S.*

INFORMATION

The Catholic's Question Box. By Father Winfred Herbst, S.D.S. Published by the Society of the Divine Savior, St. Nazianz, Wis. 808 pages. Price, \$1.50; postpaid, \$1.65.

At first thought, we might be tempted to look upon this work as a duplication of the long, justly famous Question Box of Father Conway, or the recently published Radio Replies by Fathers Rumble and Carty. But on examination, it will be found that this Question Box has a scope and *raison d'être* of its own. It is written for those who would like to have more than simple information in their perplexities, and therefore answers the questions proposed with homiletic urgency. This does not mean that intellectual meat is absent; the author uses solid arguments and quotes authoritative sources to put himself on firm doctrinal ground, but clothes them in the language of personal appeal. For this reason, many of the answers to important questions, like those dealing with courtship, kissing, contraception, chastity, marriage difficulties, etc., become rather lengthy treatises, one might almost say, sermons. The questions touch the majority of the topics that cause difficulty to Catholics and non-Catholics alike, even though they are not so numerically exhaustive as in other such works. Some of the questions are needlessly repeated under different forms, such as, for example, the one on the fate of unbaptized children in eternity. Nevertheless we welcome the book as a means of both enlightenment and persuasion to perplexed Catholics, prospective converts, priests looking for handy compilations of matter on knotty questions, and Catholic Actionists who wish to know and spread their religion.—*D. F. M.*

ANECDOTES

Brother Berthold Tells a Story. One hundred little stories, to be used as Illustrations for Sermons and Catechetical Instructions. By the Rev. Leo Woppert. Adapted into English by the Rev. Athanasius Pope, O.S.A. Published by Pustet Co., price, \$1.50 net.

It is as true today as it was in Our Savior's time that the truth strikes home best through the medium of a story. It is difficult at times to find a story to

illustrate a point of a sermon or a catechetical instruction. The compiler of this little book of 139 pages has rendered a great service to preachers and instructors. Perhaps he would have added to the usefulness of this book if he had grouped the stories under topical headings in the text itself instead of doing so merely in the index.—*E. A. M.*

RELIGION

Catholic Truth in Survey. A Textbook for the Use of Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Classes at the Secondary School Level of Learning. By Ferdinand C. Falque, S.T.B. Volume Two, Christ Our Redeemer. Published by Benziger Bros. Price, paper cover, \$0.72; cloth, \$0.96.

This is a fine textbook for religion classes of students in the third and fourth years of high school. It is built up in the form of class discussions. In the first part of the book, about one half of the whole, the author, after a short introduction on the conditions of the world and especially of Palestine in the time of Christ, gives an orderly summary of the life and work of Our Redeemer. The second part of the book is a summary of the chief points of the teachings of the Church on Faith and Morals. We believe the book fills a definite need. Its use will inevitably be a great help in the campaign to transform Catholic youth into informed and intelligent believers and doers of the word.—*E. A. M.*

The Commandments of God: The First Commandment. By Rev. Thos. B. Roche, C.Ss.R. Published by Perpetual Help Press, Pittsburgh, Pa. Price, 10 cents.

This pamphlet of 24 pages is a reprint of articles which appeared in the *Pittsburgh Catholic*. Their plain and practical character aroused general interest and approval, and the author now presents them to the public in this convenient form. They should be helpful to priests instructing Catholics who want to have a definite and understanding grasp of their moral obligations.—*R. J. M.*

Are You Scrupulous? By Daniel A. Lord, S.J. Published by The Queen's Work, St. Louis, Mo. 36 pages and cover. Price, 10 cents; lot prices.

Father Lord here relates an interview he had with the Rev. Francis J. O'Boyle, S.J., about scruples and the scrupulous. Some good sound distinctions, practical cases, and the old, old remedy: unquestioning obedience to the confessor—that might summarize this pamphlet.

—*M. S. B.*



Catholic Comment



Those who cherish ambitions of getting into that famous volume "Who's Who in America," have five or six times as much chance of realizing their dream as their forbears of 40 years back. In the present issue there are 31,545 biographical sketches, while in the first issue of 1899 there were only 8,600. The population of the country has increased about 70 per cent in the intervening years, and the celebrities about 400 per cent. In the early days, you had to be an author, artist, college professor or philanthropist to make the grade; today you have a chance as a prize-fighter, radio-performer, business man, or even a crooner, if that puts any spurs to your ambition.



This democratic nation, to hear the orators around election time, is a nation of people eagerly seeking and devouring the latest scientific knowledge on all topics of national interest, no matter how involved. "The people know what is best for the country; the people will show that they know what their government should do, etc., etc." Alas, the people's interest in governmental affairs was given a sad commentary not long ago by the report of the superintendent of documents at Washington, who is in charge of federal publications. He finds, for example, that the worst seller on Uncle Sam's list is the volume on the federal budget, a book of 900 pages, of which few copies are ever bought and those almost exclusively by newspaper men and foreigners. The average citizen knows that the budget is something that should or should not be balanced, according to his political leanings, and that is all. On the other hand, the best sellers of the publications bureau are "The Love Life of the Bull Frog" and the "Description of United States Postage Stamps," volumes that have not been known to affect the destinies of the nation.



Sadness smote us when we picked up an edition of the *St. Paul Wanderer* after the November elections. In a 72 point banner headline and sub-heads to match, it gave vent to the same type of political party baiting that has been the chief source of complaint against secular newspapers these many years. The victory of the Republicans opened the floodgates of a long pent up wrath against their opponents. Venemous phrases, intemperate generalizations, catchy accusations, combined both in headlines and the article following to reveal emotion and passion, not calm thinking at work. Examples: "Voters Demand Return to Sanity" (Inference: We are under the rule of the insane) "Repudiate New Deal Reform Monopoly" "Want Progress Without Radicalism." The usual charges are hinted at or actually made that the New Deal is of a piece with Marxist or Fascist Totalitarianism (sic), that it is a crazy quilt of crackpot reformers, an aberration, etc. The *Chicago Tribune* could not have done a better, or a worse, job. We feel that we could agree entirely with the *Wanderer's* opposition to the New Deal principles, and yet disdain the use of such rabble-rousing generalizations to make that opposition known. And so long as there were any reputable thinkers in the country honestly upholding the views we opposed, we would hate to take the

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responsibility of heedlessly flinging about charges of insanity, Marxism, Fascism, political dishonesty and the rest. We have enough of that sort of thing in secular journalism, and it solves none of our national problems.

Speaking of Fascism, Bernard Wall has a little comparison to make in a recent issue of that English paper with personality plus, the *Catholic Herald* of London. "It would be surprising," he says in commenting on the American love of baiting Italism Fascism, "for Americans if they knew that the Italians did not consider them a free people. Yet such is often the fact. For myself, I must say I would much rather be an Italian peasant owner than an employee of some big New York Store, and I have never been able to see what is the good of having a vote if most of your life is spent in absolute dependence on a boss who himself is dependent on another boss who is dependent on the neurosis of Wall Street. In fact, I often feel that a lot of shouting about 'freedom of speech' comes because people have to be so careful of what they say during all their working hours: and they say about Mussolini, who can't hit back, all the things which have been repressed at the office." In other words, there is more than one way to suppress freedom, and none of them is good, not even the American way.

Europe is having its troubles with know-it-all newspaper correspondents. There is a certain Madame Tabouis, who has become a sensation by her writings on anything and everything in the Paris *Oeuvre*, who recently tried her hand at writing a book on history. The book is crammed with the kind of "boners" you find in a freshman's history examination. She has the Declaration of Independence being made in the wrong year, mistakes the Treaty of Amiens for the Treaty of Antwerp, and mixes up wars and political manoeuvres in Europe with the utmost abandon. Mr. Christopher Hollis reviewed the book a while back in the *Tablet*, and having pointed out a score or more of the most obvious errors, sums up: "Spreading herself over a generous canvas, Madame Tabouis has in this book ample opportunity of proving that there is no era of history and no country of the world upon which she is not incompetent to write. We must be grateful to her for giving us the proof, for there can, indeed, be few other living writers who are as ignorant of anything as Madame Tabouis is of everything."

The de-Catholicization of Austria by the Nazis is well under way. Sixteen Franciscan monks have been put in jail for resisting an order to surrender their monastery, which their order has occupied for 150 years, into the hands of the State to be used for a police headquarters. Other church properties have already been taken over. We shall no doubt continue to see the Nazis alternating between trying to crush all the Jews and jail all the Catholics. However, according to present tactics, the two projects may become one and the same; for the Nazis are accusing everybody who opposes them of having Jewish blood—from the Pope down. And they are going to prove it, so they say, by publishing family trees. They may find, if they start that, a few of their own leaders out on a limb.

L u c i d I n t e r v a l s

A long wisp of artificial grain was the ornament on a girl's hat in the tramcar. It was placed horizontally, and it was tickling the face of a man who sat next to the wearer. Soon it came to rest in his ear.

The man took a huge claspknife from his pocket and began stropping it on the palm of his hand.

"Oh, what are you going to do?" cried the girl.

"If them oats gets in my ear again, miss," replied the victim, "there's going to be a harvest."

*

Customs Agent—What have you to declare?

American Tourist (returning from Europe)—I declare that I am glad to get back.

*

Joe—Have you got a picture of yourself?

Roommate—Yeah.

Joe—Then let me use that mirror. I want to shave.

*

First Illiterate—Howdy, Joe, me and Ed just found the body of a dead man over there in the holler and we thought maybe it was you.

Second Tennesseean—What'd he look like?

First—He was about your build, and—

Second—Did he have on a flannel shirt?

First—Yup.

Second—with red and white checks?

First—No, it was plain grey.

Second, closing the door—Nope, it wasn't me.

*

Soph: Man is wonderful. He has learned to fly like a bird.

Frosh: Yes, but he hasn't learned to sit on a barbedwire fence.

*

"Know how to keep a horse from drooling?"

"No."

"Teach him to spit."

*

"So you don't like corn on the cob?"

"No, that's why I bite it off."

"If you don't marry me I'll take a rope and hang myself in your front yard."

"Ah, now, Herbert, you know Pa doesn't want you hanging around."

*

"My husband lives on the fat of the land," boasted the butcher's wife. To which a customer answered, "Yes, I know, I've bought some of his pork chops."

*

The famous detective arrived on the scene.

"Heavens," he said, "this is more serious than I thought—the window is broken on both sides."

*

"You cruel child," declared Mr. Klotz, "why did you cut that poor harmless worm in two?"

"But, Mister, he looked so lonesome," vouchsafed Tiny Tim.

*

Soph—Did you ever hear the one about the racketeer sardine?

Frosh—What is a racketeer sardine?

Soph—One that always winds up in the can.

*

"Do you hear shomsing right now?"

"No."

"Thash funny. I'm talkin' to you."

Rastus—I can't get along with my wife. All she does is ignore me.

Sambo—Ignore you?

Rastus—Yes, and if there's anything I dislikes, it's ignorance.

*

A newly created papa received the glad tidings in a telegram. "Hazel gave birth to a girl this morning; both doing well." On the message was a sticker reading, "When you want a boy, call Western Union."

*

Mrs. Miller: What do you use to clean your rugs?

Mrs. Beam: I've tried lots of things, but I find John the best.

*

"Hiyah, toots, step up and meet me. I'm the breezy type."

"Yeah? Well, breeze along!"

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* * *

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Motion Picture Guide

THE PLEDGE: *I condemn indecent and immoral motion pictures, and those which glorify crime or criminals. I promise to do all that I can to strengthen public opinion and to unite with all who protest against them. I acknowledge my obligation to form a right conscience about pictures that are dangerous to my moral life. As a member of the Legion of Decency, I pledge myself to remain away from them. I promise, further, to stay away altogether from places of amusement which show them as a matter of policy.*

The following films have been rated as unobjectionable by the board of reviewers:

Newly Previewed

Exposed
Frontier Scout
Gangster's Boy
Law of the Texan
Lawless Valley
Spring Madness
Torchy Gets Her Man
West of Santa Fe
Previously Reviewed
Affairs of Annabel
Always in Trouble
Annabel Takes a Tour
Arkansas Traveler
Army Girl
Barefoot Boy
Billy The Kid Returns
Black Bandit
Blockheads
Boofoo
Boys Town
Breaking the Ice
Campus Confessions
Carefree
City Streets
Colorado Trail, The
Come On, Leathernecks
Cowboy from Brooklyn
Crowd Roars, The
Danger on the Air
Desert Patrol
Desperate Adventure, A
Down in "Arkansas"
Down on the Farm
Durango Valley Raiders
Endstation (German)
Ferfi Mind Oruit, A (Hungarian)
Five of a Kind
Flight to Fame
Four's a Crowd
Freshman Year
Fugitives for a Night
Garden of the Moon
Gateway
Give Me a Sailor
Gladiator, The
Gold Mine in the Sky
Golgotha
Guilty Trail
Hard to Get
Held for Ransom
Heroes of the Hills
Higgins Family, The
Highway Patrol
Hold That Co-ed

Holiday
Huapango (Spanish)
I'll Give a Million
I'm From the City
In Old Chicago
In Old Mexico
International Crime
Just Around the Corner
Juvenile Court
Keep Smiling
Kidnapped
Kindergarten Dr. Engel
Koralleprinzessin, Die
(German)
Ladies in Distress
Law of the Plains
Letter of Introduction
Letzte Liebe (German)
Liebe in Takt (German)
Listen, Darling
Little Flower of Jesus
Little Miss Broadway
Little Tough Guy
Little Women (Reissue)
Lord Jeff
Lost Horizon
Love Finds Andy Hardy
Mad Miss Manton, The
Man from Music Mountain
Man to Remember, A
Man With 100 Faces
Man's Country
Men With Wings
Mexicali Kid, The
Mind Your Own Business
Missing Guest, The
Monastery
Mother Carey's Chickens
Mr. Chump
Mr. Doodle Kicks Off
Mr. Moto Takes a Chance
My Bill
My Lucky Star
Mysterious Mr. Moto
Mysterious Rider, The
Night Hawk, The
Outlaw Express
Outlaws of the Prairie
Outside of Paradise
Overland Stage Raiders
Painted Desert
Pals of the Saddle
Panamint's Bad Man
Penrod and His Twin Brother
People of Bergslagen (Swedish)
Phantom Gold
Pioneer Trail
Prairie Justice
Prairie Moon
Pride of the West
Prison Break
Professor Beware
Reformatory
Renegade Ranger, The
Rich Man, Poor Girl
Riders of Black Hills
Road Demons
Rollin' Plains
Romance of the Limberlost
Room Service
Rose of Tralee
Safety in Numbers
Service De Luxe
Sing, You Sinner (New title
for Unholy Beesheb)
Six Shootin' Sheriff
Snow White and The Seven
Dwarfs
Sons of the Legion
South of Arizona
Speed to Burn
Spirit of Youth
Stablemates
Stagecoach Days
Starlight Over Texas
Straight, Place and Show
Stranger From Arizona
Swing That Cheer
Swiss Miss
Tenth Avenue Kid
Test Pilot
Texans, The
Thanks a Million (Reissue)
That Certain Age
There Goes My Heart
Three Blind Mice
Time Out for Murder
Too Hot to Handle
Touchdown Army
Tropic Holiday
Utah Trail, The
Valley of the Giants
Wanted by the Police
Western Trails
Where the Buffalo Roam
Whirlwind Homemen
White Banners
You Can't Take It With You
Young Fugitives
Young in Heart

